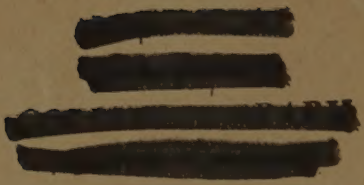
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

REV. J. HOWARD B. MASTERMAN

THE PEOPLE'S BOOKS



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BY THE

REV. J. HOWARD B. MASTERMAN

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PREFACE

It is not possible for any individual to paint a portrait of the Church of England that would be accepted as a true likeness by Churchmen of all schools of thought. The reader will accept this little sketch, not as an authoritative exposition but as a personal impression by one who has tried to realise that the Church of England is larger and nobler than the factions that divide her, and more lasting than the controversies that disturb her.

I make no apology for saying many things that are, or ought to be, familiar to all English Churchmen, for the primary purpose I have had in view has been to explain to "those that are without" what the English Church is when seen from within—

> "Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants,
> . . . . . .
> Interpreter between the Gods and men,
> Who seems all native to her place, and yet
> On tiptoe seems to touch upon a sphere
> Too gross to tread."

J. HOWARD B. MASTERMAN.

Coventry,
July 1912.

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THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

I

THE PAST

THE Church of England may be described as a river that rises from three sources. The old Celtic Church of Roman Britain was driven westward by the Anglo-Saxon invaders, and found refuge for a time in the British kingdoms of Cornwall, Strathclyde, and Wales. In Cornwall and Strathclyde the Anglo-Saxon conquerors gradually absorbed the native population, but in Wales, where English conquest came much later, the native Church lived on as an independent body, cut off by racial antagonism from the Church of Anglo-Saxon England, till the twelfth century, when the Welsh bishops began to acknowledge the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Anglo-Saxon invaders received their Christianity from two sources. The south of England was evangelised by a series of missions from Rome, of which Augustine's was the earliest and most important. Paulinus, one of Augustine's colleagues, carried the Christian faith into Northumbria, but his work was almost destroyed after the defeat of the Northumbrian King Edwin by Penda of Mercia. It was from the island of Iona,

where an Irish monk, Columba, had established his great monastic mission, that Christianity found its way into Northumbria, and thence into Mercia.

The south of England thus looked to the Church of Rome as its mother-Church, while the north was connected with the Irish Church. As the Roman and Irish Churches differed in several important particulars, England might have had two Churches, one modelled on Irish uses and the other on those of Rome. From this danger English religion was saved by the decision of the Northumbrian king, at the Synod of Whitby, in 664, to conform to the Roman use. A few years later Archbishop Theodore organised a diocesan system for the whole country, and is said to have laid the foundations of the parochial system. This parochial system grew up naturally as the work of the Church assumed a more settled character. Larger landowners were encouraged to build churches on their estates for their dependents, and to make provision, by grants of land and in other ways, for the support of the priest sent to minister there. Among other forms of freewill offering "tithes" were, in accordance with the custom of the Jewish Church, paid from early times for the support of the clergy, and in enforcing them at a later period the State was only recognising an obligation that had become universal long before. The greater landowners naturally allocated the tithe of the lands under their control to particular parishes in which they were interested, and thus from the first "livings" must have varied in value much as they do now. Ultimately, a good deal of the tithe fell into the hands of the monasteries, and thence passed, at the Reformation, into the hands of "lay impropriators."

In the first instance, the bishop probably provided a priest to serve a newly established parish, but the recognition of the right of the landowner to select an incumbent led to the system of private patronage which still exists in England. There seems to be no truth in the idea that in England tithe was originally allocated to poor relief and the repair of churches, as well as the maintenance of the incumbent. There is even less truth in the idea that tithe is in some way national property. Paid by the original landowner as a religious duty, it has remained a charge on the land as it has passed from owner to owner for a thousand years. The fact that a tenant-farmer is not a Churchman gives him no legitimate ground of grievance, any more than the fact that a landowner is a Tory would justify a Liberal farmer in regarding the payment of his rent as a hardship.

But we must leave these complicated questions, to some of which we shall return later, and come back to the history of the Anglo-Saxon Church.

The Church played an important part in the development of national life in Anglo-Saxon times. England was one ecclesiastically at least two centuries before it was one politically. In the local courts the bishop sat with the ealdorman and the sheriff, and in the central assembly—the Witan—the bishops met with the earls and thegns to watch over the spiritual and temporal interests of the kingdom. The monasteries, originally centres of missionary enterprise, gradually became centres of learning. The development of Church life was hindered by the destructive energy of Danish invaders, and by the constant friction between the monastic clergy, who were pledged to celibacy, and the

secular or parochial clergy, who were married, and whose cause was supported by the lay nobles. The quarrel culminated in the time of Dunstan, who fought a vigorous battle on behalf of the monastic clergy, and prepared the way for the efforts of Lanfranc and Anselm to enforce in England the rule of clerical celibacy for which Hildebrand and the Church reform party, that looked to Cluny as its centre, contended so strenuously in the eleventh century.

The Norman conquest changed the religious life of England in many ways. In place of the isolation of Anglo-Saxon days, England was now brought into touch with the Church life of Europe. The authority of the pope was more fully recognised, though William was little disposed to forego any of his sovereign rights. Even more important was the separation that now began between the secular and spiritual departments of government. William established Church courts for the trial of ecclesiastical causes, and withdrew the bishops from the old local courts. In the disturbed times that followed, these Church courts grew dangerously independent, and within a century Henry II found himself involved in a tremendous struggle for the maintenance of royal supremacy over the Church—a struggle in which Thomas Becket, the Archbishop, lost his life, and Henry his empire.

The foreign ecclesiastics whom William introduced made the Church more effective, and though Lanfranc and William acted together in complete accord, succeeding kings often found in the Church leaders their starkest opponents. Anselm, Henry of Winchester, Thomas Becket, Hugh of Lincoln, Stephen Langton, Grosseteste of Lincoln—all alike were

champions of English liberty as well as leaders of English religion.

It is worth while to remember that the name "Church of England" was not an innovation of the Reformation period. As all students of history know, the first clause of the Great Charter guarantees the rights and liberties of the Church of England (*Ecclesia Anglicana*), and the great Statute of Provisors of 1368 claims to have as its object the protection of the Holy Church of England (*Seinte Eglise d'Engleterre*) against papal aggression. In later statutes the name constantly occurs.

While the spiritual authority of the pope was fully recognised by the Church in England, from the first the attempt to extend that authority over other departments of national life was resented. These attempts took three directions—interference with rights of patronage by "provisions"; financial exactions, for which special contributions for the crusades formed a dangerous precedent; and the extension of the appellate jurisdiction of the papal court. From the thirteenth century onward the national protest against these things grew steadily. Sometimes the English king associated himself with the popular feeling, but frequently he found it more immediately profitable to make common cause with the pope.

When Parliament developed, national religion was represented there by the presence of the bishops in the House of Lords, and, for a time, of representatives of the clergy in the House of Commons. But the leaders of the Church preferred to vote clerical taxes in the Houses of Convocation, which began to meet regularly towards the end of the thirteenth century.

Doctrinally, the English Church was a part of the

whole Western Church. English scholars like John of Salisbury and William of Ockham helped to mould the theology of Western Europe, and once, in 1154, an Englishman occupied the papal throne.

While the great Church leaders played their part in national affairs, the village priest set himself to organise the self-government of his parish, and the vestry gradually superseded the manorial court as the organ of local administration. Towards the end of the Middle Ages there were many indications that the existing ecclesiastical system was no longer fully in touch with national feeling. In the thirteenth century the friars helped, in England and throughout Europe, to bring religion back to the people, but a century later Wiclif denounced them as mere agents of papal exaction. The Lollard movement, of which Wiclif was the leader, was an attempt to revive personal religion. Like the Methodist movement of four centuries later, it was frowned upon by the Church authorities, and led to the earliest attempt to enforce religious uniformity by penalties enforced by secular authority.

But it would be easy to exaggerate the extent to which religion had lost its hold on English life at the end of the Middle Ages. Many of our noblest parish churches date from the fifteenth century, and the connection between civic and religious life was never closer than during this period, when the trade guilds were also religious organisations, part of whose function it was to present the miracle plays that formed an important part of the religious education of the poorer people. Yet the moral influence of the Church was undoubtedly low. The monasteries, immune from all jurisdiction but that of the pope, and enormously

wealthy, were no longer, to the same extent as they had formerly been, homes of learning and devotion. Monastic life was too much a business, too little a vocation. *The Vision of Piers Plowman* and Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* serve to show how men of the world felt the lack of high moral enthusiasm in the official life of the Church. England had not grown irreligious, but it had outgrown the religious forms that had served the need of earlier and ruder times.

In the course of the Middle Ages the Church of England grew dangerously rich. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries large donations of land were given to the Church. Some of these donations were given for the endowment of monasteries, but some were fictitious in character, the donors receiving back their lands to hold from the Church, and thus escaping the obligations of feudal tenure. By the Statute of Mortmain, in 1279, all donations of land to religious bodies were prohibited, except by special leave of the king. Even after this statute had been passed, ways were found of evading it for a time, and wealth in other forms than lands continued to flow into the coffers of the Church.

It is impossible at this distance of time to analyse the motives of those who enriched the Church with their gifts. Requests for prayers for the soul of the donor frequently accompany grants for religious purposes. But those who wished to secure the perpetuation of masses for the repose of their souls generally provided an endowment for a priest—a chantry priest, as he was called—whose duty it was to chant mass daily for the soul of the founder of the Chantry. These Chantries were suppressed in the last year of the reign

of Henry VIII, and their endowments handed over to the Crown.

More than once the claim that Church property should be free from taxation led to conflicts between the Crown and the ecclesiastical leaders. The last occasion on which the question arose was in the reign of Edward I, when the Archbishop and his suffragans claimed that they were prohibited by the Papal Bull *Clericis Laicos* from paying taxes. Edward's answer was clear and effective. He who will not contribute to the support of the government cannot claim the protection of the government. When the clergy found that the royal courts would give them no redress for the loss of their possessions, they abandoned the claim to immunity from taxation, and made peace with the king.

The growing poverty of the country in the fifteenth century led to an agitation for the disendowment of the Church, but except for the dissolution of the Alien Priories nothing was done. In the following century the "Great Pillage" began. At least half the wealth of the Church was in the hands of the monasteries, and on their dissolution passed to the king. Much of this he retained for himself; much passed, either by grant, or sale at nominal price, to the new families that were now rising into prominence; a very small portion went to found some new bishoprics and educational institutions. It is impossible to estimate accurately the value of the Church property alienated at the Reformation. The annual income of the monasteries was probably equivalent to about £3,500,000 in modern currency, and the movables of the smaller monasteries alone amounted to about £1,000,000. Only a few years before, the clergy had been obliged to purchase

the royal forgiveness by a fine of £1,000,000. If to these sums are added the value of the plate and other valuables plundered from the Churches by Edward VI's Commissioners, the income of the Chantries, and the large amount of Church property appropriated by secular nobles during the short reign of the boy-king, some idea of the extent of the pillage of the Church can be formed. While it is certainly true that the immense wealth of the Church was a weakness rather than a strength to her best interests, no one who believes in the Reformation can remember without a feeling of shame the horde of greedy courtiers, whose zeal for the Reformation was largely a desire to loot the accumulated wealth of the Church.

One act of restitution deserves remembrance. The Tenths and Firstfruits that the pope had claimed from all benefices passed at the Reformation to the Crown. Queen Anne restored them to the Church, and under the name of Queen Anne's Bounty these funds are still administered for the benefit of poorer livings and other ecclesiastical purposes.

Before we turn from the religious life of medieval England, it is perhaps worth while to remind ourselves that it is a mistake to attempt to read into these times modern ideas of the relation of Church and State. For Church and State, as they exist to-day, had no place in the medieval conception of life. In each nation the whole community constituted a Christian commonwealth, of which the king was the head, while in spiritual matters the pope exercised a general authority over the whole of Western Europe. In a hundred ways the religious and secular life of the community were intertwined. That the bishops should be appointed by the

king, that Parliament should consider religious as well as secular matters, that the government should support the bishops in suppressing heresy and schism—these things seemed too obvious to be disputed. The Church of England was the local representative of that Catholic Church which claimed to be coextensive with Christendom; but it was also the organ of the national religious consciousness. Among the nations of Europe England, partly owing to its insular position, was the first to develop a feeling of nationality. As the papacy gradually drifted into antagonism to the national idea, English ecclesiastical life found itself on the horns of a dilemma. In the fifteenth century clerical and lay opinion moved in opposite directions; the leading ecclesiastics seeing in the papacy the one institution strong enough to hold together the religious life of Europe, while the general body of English laymen was beginning to suspect that the papacy was the great obstacle to the free development of the religious consciousness of the nations.

It would be far too large a task to attempt any account of the Reformation in England. But it is necessary to say something about the changes made in the position of the Church, because in some quarters the idea still survives that Henry VIII transferred part of the property of the old English Church to a new "Protestant" Church of his own creation. The Reformation was a complex movement, and much was done that all good men must deplore. But the motive of the English reformers was not innovation—still less destruction—but restoration. Their appeal was to the primitive Church of the first six centuries. They took the doctrine and practice of that Church as a standard

by which to judge later accretions. And the first later accretion that they swept away was the papal authority as exercised in medieval times. It seemed to them that for centuries the papacy had subordinated the spiritual interests of the Church to schemes of secular aggrandisement, that the influence of Rome was the great obstacle in the way of necessary reforms in the Church. The attempt at the Council of Constance to carry through a reformation of the Church "in Head and Members" having failed, each national Church was obliged to undertake its own reformation. The repudiation of papal authority left the English Church free to deal with its own abuses. The changes that followed can be summarised under three heads. First, the monastic system was swept away, and the right to marry was restored to the secular clergy. Secondly, an English Bible and Prayer Book were put into circulation, and ordered to be used. Thirdly, certain doctrines and practices that seemed to the reformers to have no warrant in Holy Scripture or the practice of the primitive Church, were repudiated. Of these the most important were the compulsory use of Confession, the invocation of saints, which had grown to enormous proportions in the later Middle Ages, the Roman doctrine of Purgatory, with the custom of masses for the dead that depended on it, and the Roman dogma of Transubstantiation, which asserted that after consecration the elements were no longer bread and wine, their "substance" having been miraculously changed by the act of consecration. It should be noted that the English Church did not deny the doctrine of an intermediate state, nor prohibit prayers for the dead in the private intercessions of the people, nor did it deny

that the Body and Blood were "verily and indeed" received by the faithful communicant. The aim of the reformers was to restore rather than to destroy. That they were wholly successful no one will venture to assert. It is no easy task to disentangle use from abuse, to keep the true while repudiating the false that has become almost a part of it. But that the English Church after the Reformation was nearer to the Church of Cyprian and Athanasius and Augustine than before can, I think, be proved to the satisfaction of any impartial student of history.

In the sphere of ecclesiastical law the Reformation swept away the whole system of Roman Canon Law, so far as the laity were concerned. It is doubtful whether the Canon Law was as completely accepted in the Church in England before the Reformation as Dr. Maitland asserts in his essay on *Roman Canon Law in the Church of England*, for though the English Church had no power to disallow any Canons of the western Catholic Church of which it was a part, local custom was fully recognised in the Church Courts as a *jus commune ecclesiasticum*, corresponding to the Common Law of the secular courts. Moreover the Crown could, and did, assert the supremacy of the law of the realm through the action of the royal courts.

The English Courts have decided that English Canon Law is binding on the clergy, but how far this includes the Canon Law of the Medieval Church is a technical question of considerable complexity.

It was necessary for the English nation to protect itself against the loss of what it had won, and it did this by asserting in the strongest terms the supremacy of the Crown. The royal supremacy was no new thing

it was exercised at least as strongly in the Middle Ages as in later times; and the Reformation Statutes claimed to be merely recognising an existing fact. What was new was the repudiation of any other earthly authority over the religious life of the nation. The English Church claimed to stand on the fourfold foundation of the Bible, the Creeds, the Sacraments, and the ordered succession of the ministry. It was this fourfold foundation that the king swore to defend, and it was for the defence of this that he wore the sword of ecclesiastical authority. But the English reformers looked beyond the local needs of their own communion. Instead of repudiating the idea of a Catholic Church, they appealed to a General Council as the final instrument of reformation and reunion. To that appeal the English Church still adheres.

We are too much inclined to think of the Reformation as a sudden and startling outburst. We do not always remember how many of the changes made during that period had been already "in the air" for a long time; and that nearly a generation intervened between the assembling of the Reformation Parliament and the Elizabethan Act of Supremacy. The Church of England in 1559 differed greatly from the Church of England of thirty years before, but neither in intention nor in fact was its continuity broken. In one of the earliest Reformation Statutes it is asserted that the king and his counsellors do not "intend to decline or vary from the congregation of Christ's Church in anything concerning the very articles of the Catholic faith of Christendom, or in any other thing declared by Holy Scripture and the Word of God as necessary for their salvation, but only to make an ordinance by policies necessary and

convenient to repress vice, and for the good conservation of this realm in peace, unity, and tranquillity . . . insuing much the old ancient customs of this realm in that behalf."

The first stage of the Reformation movement in England may be said to have closed with the accession of Elizabeth. Jewel's *Apology* and Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity* summarise the claim of the reformed English Church to be Catholic, Apostolic, and Protestant. In the period that followed, the English Church did three things. It purged itself of the leaven of Calvinism that had come to it through the influence of Continental reformers; it reasserted, under the leadership of Andrewes and Laud, its right to the ceremonial inheritance of its own earlier days; and it allied itself, to its own undoing, with the autocratic ideas of Divine Right that were asserted by the Stuart kings. To this step it was driven partly by the attempt of Puritanism to remodel national religion in a way that would have involved an almost complete breach with the past.

The Puritan party was anxious to bring the English Church more closely into harmony with the Continental reformed Churches. During the reign of Elizabeth it remained a religious party—it might be described as the extreme Low Church party of the time—but under the Stuarts it became a political party, standing for Parliamentary government against the claims of the Crown. At the beginning of the reign of James I the Hampton Court Conference gave the Puritan leaders an opportunity of stating their demands, but beyond a few changes in the Prayer Book, nothing was done to meet them. In the years that followed, Parliament became vehemently hostile to what it regarded as

Romanising tendencies in Church doctrine and ceremonial, and the Civil War was really fought quite as much over religious as over political questions. Even at the end, it is possible that Charles I might have made terms with Parliament if he had been willing to accept a Presbyterian system of Church government. While the war was in progress a large body of Puritans, especially the leaders of the army, abandoned the Presbyterian ideal and, adopting the rallying-cry of "freedom of worship," became the earliest advocates of toleration, claiming that every man should be left free to worship God in whatever way he thought best. But from this toleration the Church of England was excluded. Many of the clergy were ejected from their benefices, and in 1655 the use of the Prayer Book was prohibited under severe penalties.

It was natural that the Church of England should welcome the Restoration, and that the bishops at the Savoy Conference should be little disposed to make concessions to Puritan opinion. A few small changes were made in the Prayer Book, and the Act of Uniformity of 1662 gave the Puritan clergy the option of accepting and using it or withdrawing from their benefices by S. Bartholomew's Day, 1662. The last half of the seventeenth century was an age of great divines. Such men as Isaac Barrow, South, Pearson, Bull, Stillingfleet, and Ken make the time illustrious in the annals of the Church of England, while Baxter and Bunyan are imperishable names in the history of English Nonconformity.

The religious controversies of the period turned around the question of toleration, which was supported by the party that acquired the nickname of Whigs. Clarendon

and Danby clung to the idea of making the Church of England coextensive with the nation, but the task of suppressing Nonconformity proved too hard for even a reactionary government to achieve.

With the Revolution of 1688 the principle of toleration was for the first time definitely recognised. In other words, while the Established Church remained the recognised organ of the national religion, other religious organisations were now permitted to exist. The idea that the Church of England was the whole nation organised for religious purposes—an idea that had been an integral part of English life for a thousand years—now disappeared. And with it disappeared the claim of the State to enforce any special form of religion on its subjects. The Church of England was still the rightful inheritance of all who chose to claim their place within its communion, and the Crown, in the exercise of the royal supremacy, still acted as trustee for the nation. But the Crown was gradually ceasing to mean the personal authority of the sovereign. In the Stuart times, Parliament asserted its right to a share in the control of national religion, and hence after the Restoration an effort was made, by the Corporation and Test Acts, to insure that all members of Parliament and high officers of State should be members of the Church. In the eighteenth century this attempt broke down (though the Acts were not repealed till 1829), and in the following century the admission of Roman Catholics (1829), Jews (1860), and finally men of no religion (1888) to Parliament brought about the anomalous position that the Church could make no change in its formularies or organisation without the consent of a body of which the majority might be actively hostile to the Christian religion.

Up to the time of the Revolution, the Church had, in Convocation, a recognised organ for the expression of her mind, though its practical efficiency was gravely restricted by the fact that the laity of the Church were not represented in it, as they were, and are, in the Scottish General Assembly. But after the beginning of the eighteenth century Convocation ceased to meet except formally, and did not again meet for discussion till 1847. (York, 1859.)

The atmosphere of the eighteenth century was unfavourable to strong religious enthusiasm. Personal piety was not extinct, and the Church could still produce such men as Butler and Waterland to champion its cause; but men like Goldsmith's village pastor, "passing rich on forty pounds a year," were none too common, and the great industrial communities that grew up through the introduction of machinery and of the factory system were not effectively shepherded by the Church.

Two successive religious revivals brought new life to the Church. The first of these, the Evangelical revival, owed much to the earnest work of John Wesley, whose followers, discouraged by the apathy, or even hostility, of the official leaders of the Church, withdrew from its communion. But though Wesley was the most conspicuous figure in this revival of religion, a body of clergy, supported by a few earnest laymen, did equally important work in less conspicuous ways by leavening the Church with new ideals of personal piety and devotion. This ideal of personal holiness led on to schemes of practical philanthropy. Howard inaugurated a reform of English prison administration; Wilberforce devoted years of patient effort to the abolition of the

Slave Trade; Raikes laid the foundation of national education in the Sunday School movement. The Religious Tract Society was founded in 1799, and the Bible Society four years later. In works like these members of the Church of England acted in harmonious co-operation with Nonconformists, and thus helped to break down the barrier that a century of political antagonism had created. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel had been established in 1701, chiefly to provide the ministrations of religion to our colonies. A century later the Evangelicals founded the Church Missionary Society, exclusively for missions to the heathen.

The Church of England began about this time to devote attention to the question of national education. In 1811 the National Society was formed, and National Schools began to grow up, side by side with the British Schools founded by the British and Foreign Schools Society, which was an "undenominational" body.

By about 1830 the Evangelical revival had made its contribution to the general life of the Church. About this time, a second movement began, which was destined to exercise an equally powerful influence on the development of English religious life. The Evangelical movement had, in the early years of the century, come to centre in the work of Simeon at Cambridge; the new movement found its home in Oxford, and its greatest leaders in Newman, Pusey, and Keble. Inspired partly by the romantic revival that had drawn men's thoughts back to the past, partly by dread of Liberalism and the interference of the State with religion, the Oxford movement took the form of a reassertion of the authority of the Church. The effort

to realise the idea of an authoritative Church ultimately led Newman, and some of his chief disciples, to join the Roman Church, but many of the leaders of the movement remained loyal members to the Church of England, and faced discouragements and misrepresentations in the effort to awaken a deeper consciousness among Churchmen in England of the significance of the historical continuity of the Church, and the value of beauty and art in Christian worship.

In the years that followed the great Reform Act of 1832, many time-honoured institutions were attacked and amended. The abuses that had grown up in the Church laid it specially open to such attacks, and in a famous book, published in 1831—the *Extraordinary Black Book*, as it was called—a hostile but well-informed critic marshalled a great array of facts to prove the need of reform. A third of the clergy were pluralists, one man holding five livings. Many were non-resident. The revenues of some of the bishops were too large, those of Winchester being about £50,000 and of Durham nearly £20,000 a year.

Four years later, an Ecclesiastical Commission was appointed to recommend reforms. As the outcome of this Commission, several important changes were made in the arrangements of the Church. Two new sees—Manchester and Ripon—were founded, and a number of others rearranged. The revenues of the various bishoprics were brought nearer to equality. The Cathedral Chapters were reduced in size, and deprived of a large part of their revenues. To hold and administer the funds thus made available for general Church purposes, a permanent body came into existence, called the Ecclesiastical Commission, which now acts as trustee

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for the endowments of most of the Cathedral Chapters, and many benefices, and is able to make grants in augmentation of the endowments of poorly endowed benefices and new parishes in industrial centres.

About the same time, a Royal Commission inquired into the existing system of Church Courts, and as the result of its report, the old Court of Delegates was abolished, and its appellate jurisdiction was transferred first to the Privy Council, and then (1833) to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. It was not foreseen at the time that ecclesiastical appeals would involve doctrinal questions, with which the Judicial Committee is entirely unfitted to deal. As soon as this became apparent, High Churchmen raised a vigorous protest, but nothing has yet been done to meet their claim that "spiritual causes must be judged in spiritual courts."

The Oxford movement, which became known as the Tractarian movement from the *Tracts for the Times* in which its leading ideas were popularised, was an attack on Liberalism in politics and in theology. But some of the ablest Churchmen of the time, influenced partly by German theological teachers, felt that, instead of looking only to the past for our ideals, a determined effort should be made to bring the Church into sympathy with modern thought and life. Of these men, who acquired the nickname of "Broad Churchmen," Dr. Arnold was one of the earliest leaders. He wished to see the Church coextensive with the religious life of the nation, and attached more importance to freedom of thought than to dogma. His mantle fell on his pupil and biographer Stanley, who made Westminster Abbey the home of "Broad Church" teaching.

Although sometimes grouped with the Broad Church

party, Frederick Denison Maurice stands in a class by himself. It is perhaps true to say that no religious teacher of the nineteenth century exercised a stronger influence over English thought, but the influence was diffused and hard to define. As a religious teacher his great work was to restore to current theology the idea of the Incarnation that had been taught by the great Greek fathers, and he also took a leading share in keeping "the whole of the forward movement in the social and political life of the English people in union with God and identified with religion." It was through his inspiration that the little band of Christian Socialists, of whom Charles Kingsley, Hughes, and Ludlow were the leaders, made their earliest efforts to bring the Church into touch with the problems and aspirations of modern industrial life. He did for an earlier generation what Westcott has done for the Churchmen of our own time.

The question whether the English Church should follow the example of the pope in declaring war on the conclusions of modern science came to a crisis in 1860, when a prosecution was instituted against the authors of a little volume entitled *Essays and Reviews*, in which the claim of science to be supreme within its own domain was freely conceded. The Privy Council refused to condemn the writers, and by doing so averted a grave danger from the Church. At about the same time Bishop Colenso of Natal startled Church opinion by asserting the late date of much of the Pentateuch, and the legendary character of some of its stories. The controversy over Higher Criticism had hardly begun when the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* alarmed many Churchmen, who saw in the doctrine of

natural selection a practical denial of the Christian ideas of creation. It has gradually become clear that in both directions the early panic was unjustifiable, and the publication of a volume of essays by younger Oxford men, under the title *Lux Mundi*, in 1890, was an event of much significance, because it showed that some of the ablest of the younger leaders of the High Church party were prepared to accept many of the conclusions of modern criticism and modern science.

The history of the Church of England from the middle of the nineteenth century is the history of a gradual increase of efficiency and corporate self-consciousness. In 1851, Bishop Philpotts of Exeter gathered together the first Diocesan Synod held in any English diocese for ages. About the same time, largely through the efforts of Bishop Wilberforce, the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury began to meet for business, a House of Laymen, with somewhat limited powers, being added in 1885. Bishop Wilberforce, who held the sees of Oxford and Winchester successively from 1845 to 1873, may be said to have created a new ideal of episcopal activity. By his care in the training of his ordination candidates, by more frequent and careful administration of the rite of Confirmation, by personal contact with his clergy in their parishes, by the development of Diocesan Societies, and in many other ways, he tried to be "the main instrument in encouraging the zealous, in stirring up the faint-hearted, in animating the despondent." What Bishop Wilberforce did for two scattered country dioceses, Bishop Fraser did for a great industrial community during his tenure of the see of Manchester.

But this increase of episcopal activity, and the growth

of population in the country, made the great dioceses of an earlier period almost impossible to work. At the time of the Reformation there were twenty-one bishops in England and Wales. Henry VIII added five more, and no further additions to the episcopate were made till the nineteenth century. The Diocese of Ripon was formed in 1836, and that of Manchester in 1847. The creation of other dioceses was constantly discussed, but the fact that each new diocese needed a separate Bill to authorise it, and other causes, delayed action. In 1870 a statute of Henry VIII allowing the creation of suffragan bishops was revived—whether to the advantage of the Church may be gravely doubted. In 1878 Lord Cross's Act authorised the creation of Bishoprics of Liverpool, Newcastle, Southwell, and Wakefield. The new Diocese of Truro had been authorised two years before. In 1905 the new Bishoprics of Southwark and Birmingham were constituted.

From time to time efforts have been made to save the waste of time and effort involved in carrying a Bill through Parliament for every fresh scheme of diocesan division, and a Bill is now before Parliament to enable new sees to be constituted by Order in Council, subject to certain restrictions. As the large sum required to endow new dioceses has to be raised entirely by voluntary contributions, there seems no adequate ground for the fear that bishoprics would multiply too rapidly if greater facilities were given. At the present moment new dioceses are ready to be constituted at Chelmsford (for Essex), Ipswich (for Suffolk), and Sheffield. New dioceses are needed at Leeds, Bradford, Leicester, Derby, Coventry, Reading, Aylesbury, and perhaps Plymouth and Hull. The immense Diocese of Man-

chester, and the still vaster Diocese of London, are difficult to divide and equally difficult to work. It may be that in both these cases a superintendent bishop, with or without the title of Archbishop, and a number of bishops with defined local authority, will ultimately prove the right solution. A great change has taken place during the last century in the relations of the Church of England to the Nonconformist bodies. A series of Acts of Parliament have removed the disabilities under which "dissenters" suffered at the beginning of the century. Except for the monopoly of elementary education of a good many English villages, and the right to officiate at Coronations and other State functions, it would be hard to say what privileges of a substantial kind the Church of England enjoys. In the past, political and social causes tended to keep Nonconformists and Churchmen apart. The Churchman was as naturally a Tory as the Nonconformist was a Whig. And the stronghold of Nonconformity was in the middle class, while the "gentry" and their dependants supported the Established Church. But to a large extent these lines of division are disappearing, and the Free Churches have found it possible to co-operate with the Church of England in many great moral efforts. It is unfortunate that just at this juncture the fires of ancient antagonism should be rekindled by the attempt to force on one section of our Church a constitutional change that it does not desire or deserve.

In the realm of scholarship, the work of the three great Cambridge scholars—Lightfoot, Westcott, and Hort—of Moberly, Mozley, Creighton, Stubbs, and not a few still living, has rendered the last half of the nineteenth century illustrious. Whether the general stan-

dard of learning among the clergy is as high as at some previous times may be doubted. The strenuous activities of parochial life have encroached on the time that a less overcrowded age could give to the study of theology. But no one who cares for the future of the Church can be content to acquiesce in this condition of things.

No survey of the history of the English Church in modern times would be complete without some account of what is probably the most remarkable fact about the Church life of the century—the expansion of the Church throughout the Empire and beyond. The Church at home was slow to realise its imperial responsibilities. It was not altogether its fault that the establishment of an episcopate in America was deferred till 1784, when Bishop Seabury received consecration from the Scottish bishops; but in India, though three bishoprics were established in the early part of the nineteenth century, little effort was made by our own Church for the conversion of the native population till the Mutiny awakened the national conscience. No bishop was consecrated for Australia till 1836, or for South Africa till 1847. Then a time of awakening began. By 1860 the number of Colonial and missionary bishops had grown to thirty-five. They now number well over one hundred. The Colonial Churches, like the colonies themselves, are completely self-governing, though linked by filial relationships to the Metropolitan see of Canterbury. Some of the missionary bishops, and the bishops in smaller British possessions, are in varying degrees subject to the authority of the English Archbishop. Including the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Irish Protestant Church, and the Episcopal Church of the United States,

all of which are in full communion with the Church of England, there are 268 dioceses that belong to the Anglican Communion, in the largest sense of the words. It is a goodly heritage that has sprung from the little, struggling, ill-organised Church that Archbishop Theodore found in England twelve hundred years ago.

The extension of the episcopate throughout the Empire made it important that close relations should be maintained between the various Churches that made up the Anglican Communion, and accordingly, in 1867, a Conference was held at Lambeth, which was attended by 76 bishops. The Conference has since then met every ten years, and in 1897 the number of bishops present had risen to 194. The object of the Conference is defined as " brotherly counsel, and the consideration of many practical questions, the settlement of which would tend to the advancement of the kingdom of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, and to the maintenance of greater union in our missionary work, and to increased intercommunion among ourselves."

In 1908 the English Board of Missions inaugurated a new departure by organising a " Pan-Anglican Congress," to which clergy and laymen from all parts of the Empire were invited. Such gatherings take us into a larger world, and reduce to their true insignificance the local and temporary divergences that are wont to occupy too large a place in our thoughts. They leave behind them a deeper sense of responsibility and a richer endowment of hope.

II

THE PRESENT

It is only in the light of the historical events that have been briefly sketched in the last chapter that we can hope to understand the present position of the Church of England, or forecast its future. For the Church of England stands for the principle of historical continuity. It teaches that religion has to do with the permanent instincts and interests of humanity, and seeks to link the present with the past and so carry forward the religious gains of each generation to the next by a process of spiritual entail. The Church of England claims not only to represent the continuity of doctrine and of ceremonial, but also the continuity of organisation. It is difficult to say how far it regards such continuity of organisation as essential to the life of the Church. Certainly it regards an authoritative commission as necessary to the validity of the ministerial office, and values the historical episcopate as the outward and visible sign of the continuity of life that unites the Church of to-day with the Church of the apostolic age. To say this is not to ignore or underrate the spiritual life of other religious bodies. Wherever the fruits of the Spirit are manifested, there the Holy Spirit must be present. The ordered channels of Divine grace that the Church believes to be according to the

mind of God are not limitations imposed on the Divine activity, but guarantees given to human faith.

The distinctive place of the Church of England among the Churches of Christendom corresponds to the special place of the English race in the world. In a peculiar degree it has been the aim of English political life to combine the Roman idea of order with the Teutonic conception of liberty. In the sphere of religion the combination has never been perfectly attained. Sometimes the conception of authority and order has been carried too far; at other times liberty has deteriorated into lawlessness. English Nonconformity represents successive waves of protest on behalf of the unrestricted liberty of the individual, combined with the right of voluntary association; while the Roman Church has been ready to welcome those who have seen in the claim to freedom of opinion a denial of the authority of the Church.

This attempt to combine order and liberty shows itself in every department of the Church's system. Take, for example, the attitude of the Church of England towards Holy Scripture. No Church in Christendom has emphasised more strongly the paramount authority of the Bible as the ultimate court of appeal for Christian belief, or made such ample provision for its constant use in public worship. Yet the Church of England has imposed on its members no authoritative doctrine of inspiration. Except for the Creed and the Thirty-nine Articles, it has issued no authoritative interpretations of the teaching of the Bible. Wide divergencies of view on many points involve no disloyalty to the teaching of the Church. It may be doubted whether any other religious body is so tolerant of varieties of opinion on all but a few fundamental matters.

In the department of religious ceremonial the attempt to combine order with liberty has taken the form of the retention of instructions for public worship drawn up in a time of transition, and therefore peculiarly patient of various interpretations. As a result, it would be safe to say that not five per cent. of the Churches in England attempt to carry out the rubrics of the Prayer Book in their completeness. In this case, most Churchmen feel now that liberty has gone too far, and that some measure of uniformity in public worship is a necessary element in any true idea of a Church.

It is a mistake to represent the position of the Church of England as a mere compromise between incompatible alternatives. However imperfectly it may have been achieved, the aim of those who have guided the Church at critical moments in its history has been to comprehend both points of view. The Church of England claims to be both Catholic and Protestant, the home both of order and of liberty.

It is characteristic of our national institutions to be full of anomalies distressing to the logical mind. The Church of England shares this characteristic. For example, it has no clear definition of what constitutes a Churchman. In one sense all baptized persons in England are members of the Church of England, yet Confirmation confers the full status of Churchmanship, and the regular communicants of the Church are its effective members. But all ratepayers have votes in the parochial vestry. Again, a bishop is nominated by the Crown, acting through the Prime Minister, but he receives his authority to act from the Church; he is charged with the maintenance of discipline within his diocese, but the clergy are protected against any effec-

tive exercise of his authority by the State recognition of the freehold rights of the parson in the temporalities of his benefice. Yet the State has no share in the selection of the clergy, and no responsibility for their support. Again, the Church is an organised body, with its courts and legally recognised officers, yet it holds no property, and indeed has no body able to hold property on its behalf, the property of the Church being in reality the property of the separate parishes and dioceses, not of the Church as a whole. Hence any attempt to redistribute the revenues of the Church involves complicated legal difficulties.

Such anomalies as these—and the list might be almost indefinitely extended—are a constant source of irritation to some, while others feel that they are in accordance with the general habit of the English mind, which distrusts well-rounded systems and logical consistency, and estimates institutions from the standpoint of their practical efficiency.

The Church of England is an attempt to give organised expression to the religious consciousness of a people with strongly marked national characteristics. It makes no claim to dictate to other nations the forms of their religious life. The door to co-operation with the Roman and Eastern Churches has never been closed from our side; nor have we ever expected to be able permanently to impose the English type of Christianity on the peoples to whom it has been our privilege to carry the religion of Jesus Christ.

But can we speak of any English type of Christianity in view of the wide differences that exist between various parties in the Church of England? On this matter it is easy to take an exaggerated view. Ex-

tremists often force themselves into a prominence much greater than is justified by their actual importance. It is the solid body of central Churchmen that has constantly saved the Church from disruption, and from the paralysis of effective activity through the strife of contending factions. But as a matter of fact the old party shibboleths are every year losing their rallying power, for they are ceasing to correspond with the realities of the religious conditions of the time. It is as manifestly untrue to accuse the "Evangelical" party of to-day of slovenliness and disloyalty to the Prayer Book, as it is to accuse the "High Church" party of Romanising tendencies. It is inevitable, and probably an indication of healthy life, that Churchmen should differ on such questions as the value of ritual or the degree of sacerdotal authority that the ministerial office confers on the individual priest. But the need of the moment is a stronger recognition of the common inheritance of truth that belongs to the whole Church of England. And the last few years have seen a great growth of this deeper sense of unity. The unsettlement of opinion that has been produced by the ferment of modern thought, political attacks on the Church, the moral challenges that industrial problems have brought to our Christianity—all these have helped Churchmen who really care for their Church to recognise that this is not the time to fling about reckless charges of disloyalty or "superstition" against their fellow-Churchmen.

I have already referred to the elasticity that has been secured by the fact that no revision of the Prayer Book has been attempted for two hundred and fifty years. The influence of the Prayer Book on English

life and thought can hardly be exaggerated. The supreme liturgical instinct of some of the compilers of the earliest English Prayer Book incorporated in it a goodly heritage of forms of worship hallowed by long and catholic use. The Prayer Book has thus become a standard of worship, not only for the English Church, but also for other religious bodies, which have drawn freely from its storehouse of intercession.

In Keble's oft-quoted words, "Next to a sound rule of faith, there is nothing of so much consequence as a sober standard of feeling in matters of practical religion; and it is the peculiar happiness of the Church of England to possess, in her authorised formularies, an ample and secure provision for both." This sober standard of feeling, distinct at once from the light-hearted gaiety of the popular religion of pre-Reformation times and the morbid introspection and narrowed sympathy of later Puritanism, constitutes the characteristic feature of the theology of the English Church. Perhaps, indeed, it may be said to be the special contribution that the Teutonic race has made to the religious life of the world. In the shadow of their great forests, within sound of the sea, the Northern peoples framed a mythology that had little in common with the sunny irreverence of the Greek mind. Conscious of being hemmed round by forces immeasurably vast that helped or hindered their individual lives, the fathers of our race asked of their religion a conception of life suited to their needs. Our English Litany, the most distinctively English of all the forms of worship in our Prayer Book, is the prayer of men who are soldiers on active service, conscious of dangers around them, of the need of watchfulness and self-reliance, of

penitence and compassion. The quiet tone that pervades our English forms of worship has done something, perhaps, to limit the extent of their appeal to those who are in their educational childhood, and to whom more emotional types of worship appeal more strongly; but it has done more than we realise to foster a piety that is at once cultured and simple-hearted, and to keep learning and research in harmony with religion.

Before leaving the subject of the Prayer Book, which we must resume in our next chapter, let us remember that next to the English Bible the Book of Common Prayer has been the strongest bond of union between all the Churches that are sometimes included under the unpleasing name of "Anglican." In our own colonies, in the United States, in our sister-Churches in Scotland and Ireland, the English Prayer Book, modified in some cases in minor details, but substantially unchanged, is the accepted form of worship. In the words of the most inspiring of all our evening hymns:

> "As o'er each continent and island
> The dawn leads on another day,
> The voice of prayer is never silent
> Nor dies the note of praise away."

But it is time that we turned to the organisation of the Church of England as it exists to-day. The unit of Church life is the diocese, a fact of which we have recently been reminded in the Report of the Archbishops' Committee on Church Finance. The impossible size of some modern dioceses (though the medieval dioceses were even larger), and the development of a congregational system in town churches, have weakened

the sense of diocesan unity in the Church; but there are hopeful signs of its revival. The diocese provides an area large enough for effective organisation and the encouragement of mutual helpfulness. It saves the individual clergyman from the feeling of isolation that so often tends to spiritual paralysis, and ensures, or should ensure, that constant consultation between the Bishop and his clergy that prevents the episcopal office from degenerating into a despotism tempered by legal impotence.

The centre of the diocese is, or should be, the Cathedral, so called because it contains the Bishop's *cathedra* or throne. The governing body of most of our English cathedrals is the Chapter, consisting of a Dean (appointed by the Crown) and a certain number (usually four) of Residentiary Canons, generally appointed by the Bishop, but in a few cases (London, Worcester, Bristol, &c.) by the Prime Minister or Lord Chancellor. There was a time when these stalls were regarded as places of refuge for men past effective work, or rewards for service done in other spheres of activity, political or literary. But a new conception of the function of the cathedral in diocesan life is gradually leading to a change in this respect. Beside his three months' duty in the cathedral, a Canon free from parochial cure may serve the diocese in many ways—in fostering theological study, conducting missions, stirring up interest in foreign mission work. In such ways as these a cathedral may become a real centre of spiritual activity for the whole diocese. It may also be a centre of diocesan intercession, a place where prayer is offered continually for the needs of the diocese.

There are many who think that this result could be

better achieved if the Bishop was Dean of his own cathedral, and in such new dioceses as are founded in the future, this will probably be the case, as it is already at Liverpool and Truro. Historical causes have led to the English dioceses being grouped in the two Provinces of Canterbury and York, each under an Archbishop, who, however, has no authoritative power of control over the bishops of the Province. Outside England, the Scottish Episcopal Church forms one Province, and in Ireland there are the Provinces of Armagh and Dublin. There are also Provinces of India and Ceylon, South Africa, Canada, Rupert's Land, the West Indies, and three in Australia. The Colonial Provinces are completely self-governing, but are in full communion with the Church at home.

The chief ecclesiastical officer of the Bishop is the Archdeacon, most English dioceses being divided into two or three archdeaconries. The Archdeacon, originally the chief deacon, whose business it was to have the oversight of the charitable and other work done by the deacons, gradually became the Bishop's chief helper in the oversight of the diocese—the *oculus episcopi*. In the Middle Ages the Archdeacon's Courts became a great centre of litigation, and the exorbitant fees and abuses of justice connected with them were a constant source of grievance. After the Reformation they gradually lost power, as their functions passed largely to the ordinary law courts.

The chief work of a modern Archdeacon is the inspection of fabrics and other property of the Churches. He admits Churchwardens, represents the diocese in Convocation, and has general undefined powers of oversight within his own archdeaconry. He is also,

nominally, responsible for the examination of candidates for ordination, but the actual work is done by the Bishop's examining chaplains, of whom he is not necessarily one. As Archdeacon he receives a salary of £200 a year, the greater part of which goes to pay out-of-pocket expenses. He generally holds a benefice or residentiary canonry in conjunction with his position as Archdeacon.

A Diocese is also subdivided into Rural Deaneries. The office of Rural Dean is an ancient one, and in early medieval times all the clergy in the rural deanery were obliged to attend the chapter meetings, at which the Rural Dean presided. The Archdeacon gradually superseded the Rural Dean in many of his functions, and till within the last half-century the office was of little importance; but the development of diocesan activity has now given fresh importance to the position of the Rural Dean as the channel of communication between the Bishop and the clergy of the diocese. The Rural Dean is, in most dioceses, appointed by the Bishop, but in some dioceses (Exeter, Southwark, and London) the clergy elect their own Rural Deans.

The smallest unit of Church organisation in England is the parish. We traced in the last chapter the growth of the parochial system in this country. For more than a thousand years the whole of England has been mapped out into parishes, so that every man, woman, and child in the country may have within reach a priest on whose ministrations they have a definite claim. There is no doubt that it is in this parochial system that the real strength of the Church of England lies. It gives to every clergyman a defined sphere of activity, and it guarantees, or at least tries to guarantee, that

religion shall be brought within the reach of every Englishman, not as a matter of grace but of right. The chief weakness of the parochial system as at present existing is that the parishioners have no effective voice in the management of their own parish church. The patron may be a private individual or a body of trustees having no connection with the parish, and knowing little of its needs; and the incumbent when appointed is amenable to no control but that of the Bishop, who has only very limited powers of interference. Except for grave moral offences, or persistent neglect of the minimum of duty legally required, the Vicar of a parish is practically irremovable. It is easier to recognise the evil of this system than to suggest an effective remedy. No one who cares for the welfare of the Church would wish to see the clergy "under the heel" of their parishioners, and the experience of the few cases where the parishioners appoint to a benefice does not warrant the hope of a successful reform on those lines. The question belongs to the general subject of Church Reform, with which we shall deal later.

The incumbent of a parish is called Rector or Vicar. A Rector is an incumbent who receives the full revenue of the parish, and who, by an old statute, is responsible for the upkeep of the chancel of his church; where the "greater tithes" have passed into lay hands, the tithe-owner is Lay Rector of the parish. Vicars were originally clergymen who acted for the monasteries, when the tithe of the parish had come into their possession, but the name is now given to all clergymen, not Rectors, who are in charge of a fully-constituted parish, the test provided by the Act being that they receive the marriage fees of the area that they serve.

Technically, the incumbents of all new parishes are "perpetual curates."

A curate is, as the word implies, a person who has the *cure* or care of the souls of a certain district. Every Rector or Vicar is therefore a curate, the colleagues who help him being properly assistant curates. On the appointment to a benefice, a clergyman receives the cure of souls from the Bishop. This is called his *institution*. He is *inducted* into the temporalities of his "living" by the Archdeacon. An assistant curate is licensed by the Bishop to the parish in which he is to serve. For not less than a year after his ordination as deacon (which cannot take place till he has reached the age of twenty-three) he must remain in that office, and is unable to celebrate Holy Communion or give absolution. He ought not to conduct a marriage service, since the blessings in that service belong to the priestly office. No incumbent can dismiss his assistant curate without the Bishop's permission, and then only with six months' notice; while an assistant curate can leave at any time with three months' notice. But a newly appointed incumbent can at any time within six months of his appointment give any of the assistant curates six weeks' notice. This rule is often a grave hardship to an unbeneficed clergyman, and the insecurity of tenure that it involves has been the subject of protests for some time. The assistant curates of the Church also suffer from the disability of not being allowed to vote for representatives in Convocation.

Convocation is the constitutional governing body of the Church. The Provinces of Canterbury and York have each Convocations of their own. By an Act of 1534, a royal writ is necessary to authorise a meeting

of Convocation. Such a writ is now issued to each Archbishop at the time of the summoning of a new Parliament. The Archbishop then summons the diocesan Bishops of his Province to attend Convocation, and to provide for the election of clergy (*Proctors*, as they are called) to represent the clergy of the diocese. Besides the Bishop, the Dean of the Cathedral and the Archdeacons are *ex officio* members of Convocation, and they, together with a representative from each Cathedral Chapter and two representatives from each diocese, constitute the "Lower House," the Bishops sitting alone as an "Upper House." Convocation has no power to make Canons or inaugurate changes in the formularies and constitution of the Church without the preliminary issue by the Crown of "Letters of Business," and any such alterations require the subsequent sanction of the King in Parliament.

Convocation cannot change its own constitution, and the fact that it is a Provincial instead of a national body prevents it from adequately expressing the mind of the Church. Under the inspiration of the present Archbishop of Canterbury, an attempt is now being made to provide the Church of England with an organised system of representative institutions from the Ruri-decanal Conference, consisting of representatives of each parish, elected only by duly qualified Churchmen, through the Diocesan Conference to the Representative Church Council. None of these bodies has at present any legal status, but they are valuable training-grounds for the voluntary activities of the Church.

Though the jurisdiction of Church Courts has been much restricted since the Reformation, their powers

are still considerable, and may become more important in the future. The lowest Court—that of the Archdeacon—has been dispossessed of most of its powers. Each diocese has its own Consistory Court, presided over by the Chancellor of the Diocese, an official appointed by the Bishop. The Provincial Court for the Province of Canterbury is the Court of Arches, so called because it formerly sat in the Church of S. Mary Le Bow, Cheapside. The Dean of Arches is also the judge of the York Chancery Court, the Provincial Court of the Northern Province. The final Court of Appeal is the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, on which certain bishops sit as assessors when ecclesiastical causes are being dealt with.

In the case of an illegal action by an incumbent, the Dean of Arches issues a "monition" ordering obedience to the law; if this is disregarded, the incumbent is "inhibited"—that is, prohibited from officiating in his church; if he refuses submission, he is liable, after three years, to be deprived. He is also liable to imprisonment if he disobeys the inhibition.

The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council has proved a very unsatisfactory Court of Appeal for ecclesiastical cases, partly owing to its narrowly legal conception of its functions, and in recent years two notable attempts have been made to reassert the spiritual authority of the Archbishops. The first of these was the Lincoln Case, in which a prosecution was instituted against the Bishop of Lincoln for alleged illegal ritual. The case was heard by the Archbishop, with some episcopal assessors, and the Privy Council declined to challenge the competence of the Court. More recently, the Archbishops have claimed the power given them in

the Prayer Book of interpreting rubrical directions, and have pronounced "opinions" on certain questions of ritual—the use of incense and of portable lights. Of course some clergy are prepared to defy all authority except their own, but the "opinion" of a spiritual court of this character has a much stronger claim on the obedience of loyal Churchmen than any verdict of a secular court can have.

It may be worth while to say something about the question of the authority of the Church to define the conditions of communion, as the matter has been raised by a recent case, and the claim has been made in certain quarters, where bitter hostility to the Church leads to a constant desire for her degradation, that the Church's established position involves the right of the State to prescribe the conditions of communion. The whole matter is clearly expressed in the rubric that precedes the Communion Office, where the priest is authorised to refuse to admit to communion open and notorious evil livers, and those between whom malice and hatred reigns. But he must at once give account of the same to the Bishop, who "shall proceed against the offending person according to the Canon." The principle involved in this rubric is that the right of permanent excommunication is vested, not in the parish priest, or even the Bishop, on his mere personal fiat, but in the duly constituted Church Courts, where the accused person can be heard in his own defence. It is true that the prosecution of such offenders has now fallen into disuse, but there is probably no insuperable difficulty in its restoration; and it would certainly be an intolerable condition that a Churchman should be liable to excommunication by a mere episcopal decree without any

chance of defending himself against the moral stigma that such excommunication involves. As a matter of fact, his chance of redress is provided by the secular courts, whose business is to decide not what are the terms of communion in the Church of England, but only whether, under the terms that the Church herself has laid down, the individual is disqualified. Any attempt to make a technical breach of Church law a ground for refusing Holy Communion to a Churchman desiring to receive it would justly be visited by the secular courts with a demand that the Church should be true to her own moral standards. But, on the other hand, any attempt of the secular courts to condone moral offences would undoubtedly lead to an immediate disruption.

It may be added, in view of the particular case in question, that what is fully recognised and sanctioned by the Churches in Canada and Australia can hardly be treated as "notorious evil living" by a Church in full communion with them.

In considering the position of the Church of England as an Established Church, it is necessary to distinguish three things—the position of the Church as a National Church; as a Corporation, or rather a federation of many corporations, holding property; and as a religious body receiving a certain recognition from the State.

The claim of the Church of England to be a National Church belongs to her claim to be a part of the Catholic Church, and is independent altogether of any special relation with the State. The Catholic idea of the Church involves the recognition of such variations of outward form as may be needed to enable Christianity to become the expression of the religious consciousness

of every nation. The Church of England claims to be the National Church of the English people on three grounds. It is the only form of organised religion in England that can claim a continuous life from nearly the beginning of the existence of the English people; it recognises a responsibility for providing the ministrations of religion for all English people who are willing to accept them; and it has tried to graft on the stock of essential Christian truth the special characteristics of the English mind and character. These facts cannot be affected by any rearrangements of the relations of Church and State. Nor are they affected by the refusal of the Roman Church to recognise us as a sister Church. It is essential to the Roman controversial position to deny to us any right to the title of Catholic. Our reply is to ask what essential part of the Catholic inheritance we lost at the Reformation. At this point the controversy resolves itself into a discussion of the validity of English Orders, and becomes too involved to pursue further now.[1]

"The root idea of the National Church in England," says Dr. Creighton, "is simply this, that England can manage its own ecclesiastical affairs without interference from outside." And we may add that England recognises an equal right to ecclesiastical self-government in any body that the events of history have welded into a nation.

The Incarnation justifies us in the belief that it is the will of God that the spiritual should clothe itself in the forms of national and local life, should become not an external authority but an influence shaping national

[1] Much valuable information may be obtained from the Tracts of the Church Historical Society (S.P.C.K.).

life from within. "A National Church stands in close relation to the life of a particular nation, and tries to lead it to a recognition of its eternal destiny, not to force it into a common mould. It persuades rather than commands; its weapon is influence, not power." The Church of England will cease to be a National Church, not on the day in which it is disestablished, but on the day in which it is content to be a sect, with narrowed and clearly marked frontiers, and a uniformity enforced by ecclesiastical discipline.

As a National Church, the Church of England represents an attempt to give organised expression to the religious consciousness of the nation, as the machinery of the State tries to give expression to its political consciousness. In both, the attempt is imperfectly realised. No government ever voices the unanimous opinion of the citizens of this country, and it would be vain to hope that any ecclesiastical organisation could ever represent the religious convictions of the whole Christian folk of England.

But the Church also comes into relation with the State as a body holding property. It is idle to suppose that any body holding property in trust for certain purposes can be immune from State control. The title "Free Churches" is a misnomer if it is intended to imply that the religious bodies so named are free to shape their own destiny without interference from the State. Not many years ago the Free Church of Scotland, after becoming involved in a long lawsuit with regard to the claims of the "Wee Frees" to be the true Free Church, was obliged to secure an Act of Parliament to reverse an adverse legal decision. The State cannot evade the duty of seeing that the property

of any religious body is not alienated from the uses for which it was originally intended. The law has sometimes shown a very unintelligent conception of what constitutes the continuity of a religious corporation, but even a much more generous recognition of the fact that a Church is a living, and therefore, within limits, a changing body, would still leave to the State the ultimate decision whether, let us say, the Calvinistic Methodists could repudiate Calvinism and yet retain their chapels.

It is important that this should be clearly recognised, because some Churchmen have a fallacious idea that Disestablishment would mean complete emancipation from State control. It could only do so if it were accompanied by a disendowment more complete than even the wildest liberationist has ever suggested.

But when we speak of the Church as Established, we mean that a close and complex relationship has grown up in England, through the facts of history, between the secular and spiritual sides of national life. Historically, it would be more correct to say that the Church of England established the State than that the State established the Church. The description "established by law" was first applied to the Church of England in a Canon of 1604, but did not come into general use till the Revolution, when some title was needed to distinguish the Church of England from other religious bodies in the country. It means that a certain recognition is accorded to the Church of England in return for certain services that it is expected to render to the community. This recognition finds expression in five directions: (1) the sovereign must be in communion with the Church of England; (2) the

Church of England acts as the religious representative of the nation at great national functions; (3) the secular authority enforces the decisions of the Church Courts; (4) the right of all duly qualified persons to the sacraments and services of the Church is protected by the secular authority, and all changes in the constitution and formularies of the Church require the sanction of the King in Parliament; (5) the Bishops are nominated by the Prime Minister acting for the Crown, and twenty-six of them sit in the House of Lords.

These specific legal facts are an attempt to give expression to the idea that the State does not regard the religious interests of the community as a matter of indifference. While leaving the individual free to adopt any religion that he prefers, so long as its tenets do not conflict with the fundamental moral principles on which the State is founded, the Crown has recognised the Church of England as the residuary legatee of whatever other religious organisations in England do not claim as their own. The right to minister to the English people was never given by the State to the Church of England; all that the State has done has been to recognise the fact that the Church of England claims the right, and to take security that the right shall be exercised with due regard to the interests of secular authority.

No incident of the Church's established position is more open to attack, on theoretical grounds, than the nomination of the Bishops by the Crown, through the Prime Minister. It is hard to defend the retention of the form of election by the Chapter in the case of the older bishoprics in view of the fact that if the Chapter fails to elect the royal nominee within

twelve days the Crown may appoint by Letters Patent. New dioceses where there are no Chapters are filled by direct appointment by the Crown. But it must be remembered that the consecration of a Bishop, without which he can exercise none of the functions of the office, is the act of the Church. Though the Archbishop and his coadjutors are liable to the penalties of Præmunire if they decline to consecrate the nominee of the Crown, it is inconceivable that they would consent to consecrate an unworthy candidate. As a matter of fact, the system, however indefensible in theory, does not in practice work badly. This is largely due to the fact that the Prime Ministers of the last century have been men of high and honourable character, who have regarded this department of their work as a grave responsibility. The accession to power of a Prime Minister hostile to the Church or avowedly irreligious would necessarily involve a change in the method of nomination.

It cannot be denied that the intervention of the State in Church affairs has, during the last two centuries, done much to protect freedom of thought, and to save the Church from becoming the exclusive possession of the particular religious party dominant for the moment. It has kept the Church in touch with the changes of national feeling, and has diffused the light of Christian truth over a wider area than would have been possible otherwise. Undoubtedly there has been loss as well as gain. The Church has often been content to reflect the ideals of the class from which its leaders have been drawn. Since the Reformation few Bishops have come from artisan homes, And the protest of the Church for social righteousness has been correspondingly

weakened. In great moral crusades such as those against slavery, against the abominations of the factory system, against war among nations, the authorised leaders of the Church have not been in the forefront of the battle.

It is important to remember that the question before us as a nation is not whether the relations between the Church and the State shall take a particular form, but whether a condition that has grown up gradually through a thousand years of national history should be suddenly and violently brought to an end. Unquestionably the disestablishment and disendowment of the English Church would be regarded throughout the world as a practical repudiation of religion by the English people, and however far from the truth such an idea might be, we are bound to take account of the influence of religious changes in this country on the general welfare of the Christian faith throughout the world. Patience will disentangle many a tangled skein that impatience is prepared to cut asunder with rude haste.

The gravest issue now threatening the relations of the Church with the State is in regard to the laws of marriage. Against facilities for divorce the Church is bound to protest while it retains in its marriage service the definite statement that "it should never be lawful to put asunder those whom Thou by matrimony hast made one." Any attempt by the State to compel the clergy to marry divorced persons could only end in the severance of the relations that have for so long kept the laws of England in harmony, in their main principles, with the Christian law that the Church exists to assert. It is not improbable that a solution may be

found in compulsory civil marriage, which would be followed, in the case of those persons who accept the Church view of marriage, by a religious service. But could the Church, in the event of this arrangement coming into force, welcome to its Altars those who do not mean by marriage what the Christian mind has always believed it to mean? The question is complicated and difficult, and may have far-reaching results on the future of English religion.

Leaving the whole question of Church Reform to our next chapter, let us turn from the subject of Church organisation to that of the inner life of the Church.

We believe that it was the purpose of Jesus Christ to found a spiritual society in union with which the individual might find the realisation of his own spiritual life, receiving through ordered channels the inflow of spiritual grace, and contributing to the life of the Body his own special gift of service. We believe that the Church was intended to be a visible body—"a congregation of faithful men in which the pure word of God is preached and the sacraments duly administered." This Body is represented to us in the Catechism as an organism, a family, and a kingdom—an organism, of which Christ is the head, and we the members; a family, of which God is the Father, and we His children; a kingdom, of which Christ is king, and we His subjects. The normal method of admission into this society is through the sacrament of baptism—a sacrament that the Church of England offers to little children, because we believe that spiritual life is not God's response to the faith or merit of the individual, but a free act of grace to which the individual must be taught to respond. It is the whole Christian society, acting through its

authorised representative, that offers to God the life that is His by right. If it be objected that the doctrine of baptismal regeneration makes the fact of spiritual birth dependent on human agency, we reply, this is not more strange than the fact that God has been pleased to ordain that the fact of natural birth should be dependent on human acts.

In baptism a child becomes a member of the Church, and therefore the whole Christian society becomes responsible for providing that the child shall be taught the true nature of the relationship into which he has been brought. In the Catechism, the Church of England offers to its children a simple scheme of moral teaching, based on the Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer. The so-called "denominational teaching" which the Church claims for the children entrusted to its care in baptism really includes little that is not accepted by all Christian bodies. If, for example, the Church Catechism is compared with the "Free Church Catechism" drawn up some years ago as an authoritative statement of the doctrinal position of the Free Churches, the points of resemblance are much more striking than those of divergence. But the danger of undenominational teaching is that it is liable to lose all distinctive character, and so cease to be, in any real sense, religious at all. The future of religious instruction in our elementary schools is impossible to forecast, but the gradual loss of its control over the day schools is leading the Church to realise that it must emphasise the fact of parental responsibility, and also make its Sunday schools more efficient centres of religious education.

The postponement of the rite of Confirmation, which

originally followed immediately on baptism, as it still does in the Eastern Church, has enabled the Church of England to associate the laying on of hands with the "coming of age" of its children. Instruction in preparation for Confirmation is much more carefully given than was formerly the case, and the child is taught to regard the service, not only as a public confession of faith in Christ, but also as a strengthening of his spiritual life by the gift of the Holy Spirit. Through the laying on of hands he enters on his office as part of the priestly society of the Church, just as in ordination a further laying on of hands conveys the right to act as the executive agent of the same priestly society.

The normal rule of the Church of England limits the right to Holy Communion to confirmed persons. A good many Churchmen regret the attempt to enforce this rubric in the case of faithful Nonconformists, who may wish to communicate on certain occasions without necessarily identifying themselves completely with the English Church. There is a kind of spiritual hospitality that seems to belong to the idea of a Catholic Church, whose instinct should be to include rather than to exclude. To say this is not to advocate indiscriminate invitations to Christians of other religious bodies to communicate at our altars. Fortunately the Prayer Book gives the officiating minister no right to inquisitorial investigation in the case of those who present themselves as communicants, being content to throw upon the individual the responsibility of judging whether he is morally and technically qualified to obey the invitation of Christ.

The Church has laid down no rule as to when and how often its members should receive the Holy Com-

munion, except that "every parishioner shall communicate at the least three times in the year, of which Easter to be one." One of the chief objects of the Oxford movement was to restore Holy Communion to its true place in the Church's system of worship. All Churchmen must regret that so many of the controversies between Churchmen of different parties should have turned around the service that beyond all others should constitute a bond of union. Some of these controversies—such as that about the "Eastward position"—are gradually being recognised in their true proportions, but such questions as that of "non-communicating attendance," of the (alleged) obligation of fasting communion, and of "Eucharistic vestments," are of real importance.

In its doctrine of Holy Communion the Church of England, while repudiating the "Zwinglian" view of the service as only commemorative in character, and the Roman doctrine that the substance of the elements is transformed by the act of consecration, has been content to assert the reality of a Divine Presence communicated to the faithful, without defining further the exact manner of that Presence.

We greatly need to recognise more fully the significance of Holy Communion as the outward and visible sign of the family relationship that ought to subsist within the Christian society. The Church of England has not, in the past, laid enough stress on the social aspect of the Eucharist, and the charge of "stiffness" and unfriendliness that is often brought against us has more justification than we like to recognise.

The principle that the abuse of a thing doth not take away the lawful use thereof is illustrated by the atti-

tude of the Reformers towards the practice of auricular confession. While providing, in the public services of the Church, forms of confession for general use, they made no attempt to prohibit acts of personal confession, so long as they were voluntary in character. Indeed, in the exhortation in the Communion Office those who cannot quiet their own consciences are expressly invited to come to some discreet and learned minister of God's Word, and open their grief, that they may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice. No loyal minister of the Church of England may teach confession as necessary, but no minister who cares for the flock entrusted to him will refuse to receive the sacred confidences of those who need the assurance of the Divine forgiveness and wise counsel as to how to overcome sin. The attitude of the Church of England with regard to confession is different from that of the Roman Church, and it is unfortunate that this fact should sometimes be obscured by a close approximation of methods. Confessional boxes are out of place in the Church of England, because they tend to separate the priestly and pastoral office, which it is the special glory of the Church of England to unite.

Authority to teach and to administer the sacraments is given to the ministers of the Church by the laying on of the hands of the Bishop. In so ordaining, the Church of England believes that it is following the normal custom of the primitive Church. In the selection of candidates for ordination, the people took a much larger share in early times than they do now. The ordination of the Seven Deacons in Acts vi. may be regarded as typical of the normal practice. "Look

ye out, brethren, from among you seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." Here the selection rests with the entire Christian community, while the authoritative commission is conferred by the apostles.

A trace of this ancient right of the laity remains in the address to the people in the ordination service, wherein they are invited to state any lawful impediment of which they are aware. By demanding Letters Testimonial and by providing that a declaration—the so-called "Si Quis"—shall be read in the parish to which the candidate belongs, the Church has tried to insure that every candidate shall be fully attested as to his moral character.

The Church of England does not reordain any who have received priest's orders in the Roman or Eastern Church, but she has not felt it possible to authorise ministers of other Christian bodies, who have not been episcopally ordained, to teach or minister the sacraments in her congregations.

A university degree, or some other equivalent examination, is required of all candidates as an evidence of general education, and every Bishop holds an examination for the purpose of testing their theological competence. By the Thirty-sixth Canon, as amended in 1865, every candidate must make this declaration: "I assent to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion and to the Book of Common Prayer, and of the Ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons; I believe the doctrine of the Church of England, as therein set forth, to be agreeable to the Word of God; and in public prayer and administration of the Sacraments I will use the form in the same book prescribed, and none other, except so

far as shall be ordered by lawful authority." It will be noticed that the assent given to the Articles in this declaration is of a general character. Up to 1865 the form was more specific, and committed the candidate to a detailed acceptance of the Articles. The change was made in response to a strong feeling that to ask for specific assent to a long and controversial series of doctrinal propositions was to put a needless strain on the conscience of men—a strain that the most conscientious men were likely to feel most. Within limits, the interpretation of what is involved in the declaration is left to the conscience of the individual clergyman, and it is the boast of the Church of England that she trusts her clergy more than any other Church in Christendom. Opinions will always differ as to what degree of divergence from the accepted doctrinal standards of the Church is permissible to honourable men. A Church will naturally give to its ordinary members a much wider latitude of opinion than can be wisely accorded to those to whom she gives formal recognition as teachers, but the restatement of truth in the light of each age's special needs is as essential a part of the work of the Church as the defence of the faith "once delivered to the saints," and there is a danger lest, in the effort to pull up the tares of heresy, we root up the wheat with them.

The Church of England regards a duly ordained ministry as essential to the welfare of the Christian society, because she believes that it belongs to the Divine purpose to act through ordered channels. The so-called laws of nature are uniformities of Divine activity in the realm of natural things, and without such uniformities civilised life would be impossible. No man would sow without

some guarantee that seedtime will be followed by harvest. So we believe that in the realm of spiritual things God has provided guaranteed channels of Divine grace, not as limitations of His own power, but as acts of condescension to human needs. A real understanding of what sacerdotalism means is the most effective cure for clerical arrogance, for it is a constant reminder to the priest that the right to exercise the ministerial office is his not in virtue of his personal goodness or learning or ability, but as the outcome of a Divine election.

The Church of England has been content to assert the validity of her orders and the efficiency of her sacraments, without denying that Divine grace may flow through other channels than those that she has provided. But she has never been prepared to regard the question of an ordered ministry as a matter of indifference, or of slight importance. In this she is at one with the Presbyterian Churches, in which a body of elders exercise what in her system is the specifically episcopal function of ordination. If it were possible to conceive of the Church of England as placing its episcopate in commission in the hands of a body of priests, the position would be practically that of the Presbyterian system. Some have thought that this fact points towards a possible understanding between the Presbyterian and Episcopal Churches, but the question is too complex to be discussed in detail here.

It is worth while to remember that the episcopal system may assume other forms besides that of the monarchical episcopate as at present existing in this country.

It may be well to say something, in conclusion, about

the financial and other resources of the Church of England. According to the Official Year Book of the Church of England the communicants of the Church at Easter, 1911, numbered 2,342,153, and the number of candidates confirmed in that year, 254,000. The Church of England provides seating accommodation in its churches for 7,275,000 people, and of these seats 6,000,000 are free. The annual income administered by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and the Queen Anne's Bounty Board amounts to about £5,750,000. Besides this, there are various parochial endowments, which do not pass through the hands of the Commissioners. The total net income of all the English benefices from all sources amounts to a little under £4,000,000, and about £1,100,000 is devoted to the stipends of the unbeneficed clergy. If all the parochial revenues of the Church were "pooled" and re-allotted, each beneficed clergyman would receive about £270 a year.

It is sometimes asserted that the existence of endowments discourages the generosity of Churchmen, but the official figures do not warrant the statement. The voluntary offerings included in the official S.P.C.K. returns amounted last year to £8,000,000, including nearly a million given to Foreign Missions, and nearly £700,000 to hospitals and other philanthropic purposes. This includes only amounts actually raised by Church collections and other parochial efforts, and does not include the subscriptions given by individual Churchmen to many forms of philanthropic enterprise.

In the thirty-seven dioceses of England and Wales there are about 14,400 parishes; in each of them, with

a few exceptions, there is a separate incumbent. There are also about 7200 unbeneficed clergy engaged in parochial work. The staff of the Cathedrals, and the clergy engaged in educational or secretarial work, probably number about 2000, making a total of nearly 24,000 clergy. The diocese which has the largest number of parishes is Norwich, with about 900, York (660), Oxford (639), St. Alban's (630), and London (614) coming next. Among the largest parishes in England are Portsea and Yarmouth (both about 40,000), Aston (32,000), East Ham (35,000), with the immense parishes near it (Upton Park, West Ham, Plaistow), each over 25,000, and Barking (28,000). Among the smallest are Willersley (6), Wilcote (7), Yelford (15), and Eccles-next-the-Sea, Tattenhoe, and Ford (17). The most "valuable" livings are S. Botolph, Bishopsgate (£3000), Prestwich (£2600), Rugby (£2400), Hawarden (£2338), and S. Luke's, Chelsea (£2100). But the actual net value of these, and other apparently rich livings is very different to the gross value—S. Botolph's, Bishopsgate, being actually "worth" £1100 a year and Hawarden under £600. Among the least valuable livings are Whitcombe (£12), Sturston (£13), and Kirby Bedon (£9). There are a considerable number of benefices in which the incumbent, after paying necessary outgoings, receives scarcely any remuneration for his services. In estimating the voluntary offerings of the Church, a large sum ought to be added for the work of the clergy who serve the Church for less than a living wage.

III

THE FUTURE

THE purpose of this chapter is not to foretell the future of the Church of England—for that no man can do—but to consider the problems with which she is confronted, and the nature of the opportunity that lies before her. Many things conspire to make the present time a critical period in the life-history of our Church. The political changes of the last half-century have placed supreme power in the hands of a class of which the great majority regards much that the Church values, not so much with hostility as with indifference. To many of the thoughtful artisans of our English towns the Church of England is an alien organisation, an integral part of an order of things that is passing away. There is probably less active hostility to it now than a generation ago, but there is a pathetic feeling that its ideals are not their ideals.

It is equally true of the leaders of thought that they are no longer hostile to organised religion. But they see the Church of England committed to formularies that belong to another age and to different conditions of thought. In their dreams of the religion of the future, the Church of England does not take any important place. Then, again, the circumstances of modern life have weakened the conventional (but not necessarily

insincere) recognition of religion that in earlier times made church-going a natural habit of the upper and middle classes.

Yet, in spite of these discouraging facts, the Church of England is most certainly not losing ground in modern England—it may even be asserted with some confidence that it is regaining ground lost in an earlier period. Schemes for diocesan division and Church extension, efforts at financial reform, the development of lay activities through such organisations as the Church of England Men's Society, all give evidence of the stir of life in the Church, and though the multiplication of Church Societies is a doubtful blessing, at least it serves to show that Churchmen are anxious to meet the requirements of the age. Perhaps our greatest need at present is not more life, but the wise guidance of the energies of Churchmen into those channels of service that will best serve the cause of unity and efficiency. For the Church of England shares to the full the strong individualism that is at once the strength and weakness of English character. It does not move as one body along lines of corporate activity; even on great moral questions, the initiative does not generally come from its official leaders. Little groups within the Church gather to promote international peace, social purity, economic righteousness. It is vain to look in the English Church for the authoritative guidance and explicit moral system that gives the Roman Church its attractiveness to minds of a certain kind. For it is as the witness and keeper of Holy Writ, and not as an infallible Divine Society, that the Church of England claims the obedience of its children.

Those who are dissatisfied with the somewhat un-

defined position of the Church of England differ in the conception that they form of its true line of development. One school of thinkers hopes to guide this development in an intensive rather than an extensive direction. They wish to draw the frontiers of the Church more clearly—to deepen rather than to widen the life of the body. Their cry is not for more Churchmen but for better Churchmen. Canon Hobhouse's recent Bampton lectures on *The Church and the World* may be said to express the aspirations of this school. To him the history of the Church presents itself as a series of unworthy compromises with the spirit of the world, from which he would have her come out and be separate. Men who think thus are inclined to welcome rather than to fear the disestablishment of the Church. They see her again as a little community of earnest souls struggling against the blind forces of world-darkness, with the cross as her portion till the end.

Another school desires to see the Church of England widening her frontiers till she gathers to herself all the moral forces of the national life. Dr. Fremantle's Bampton lectures on *The World as the Subject of Redemption* voice the aspirations of this school of thought. Disestablishment would, in the opinion of those who hold this view, be disastrous to the Church of England, since it would deprive her of the right to claim to be the organ of the moral life of the community.

Carried to their logical issue, both these ideals involve the abandonment of half the present claim of the Church of England, whose *raison d'être* is to hold together two ideals, without sacrificing either to the other. In the Bible, the Creeds, and the Sacraments she claims her share in the inheritance of the whole

Catholic Church, while she asserts the right of every national Church to use such ceremonies as it shall think best "to the setting forth of God's honour and glory, and to the reducing of the people to a more perfect and godly living." She is Catholic in the substance of her faith, national in the forms of expression that embody it.

But without any loss of national character, the Church of England might well cease to be inarticulate, as it is to-day. Very confident assertions are constantly made as to what our Church teaches or approves or forbids; but the most that can be said is that we have inherited a body of rules and definitions from the English Church of the sixteenth century, some of them patient of a variety of interpretations, and not a few of them of antiquarian rather than of practical interest. What we need most is an articulate voice that shall express the mind of the Church—for it is impossible to accept the present Houses of Convocation as in any real sense representative of the Church of England. Whether the Representative Church Council that has now come into existence will be able to voice the opinion of the Church, time will show. If the general body of Church laymen could be roused to a stronger consciousness that they, no less than the clergy, are an integral part of the Church of England, the moral witness of the Church would be immensely strengthened. For a Church that has constituted "God's Word written" as the supreme court of appeal for all its teaching cannot deny to the layman his right to a share in the application of the eternal moral principles of our religion to the changing conditions of modern life. And any attempt of the clergy to enforce a claim that

is not supported by the moral instinct of the laymen of the Church is bound to injure, more than it advances, the cause of religion.

The subject of Church Reform may be considered under three heads: (1) organisation and finance, (2) worship and ceremonial, (3) doctrine.

The question of organisation begins with the parish. Reformers urge with truth that the autocratic powers of the parish priest have deprived the parishioners of any real control over their own parish Church. The remedy for this state of things is to be found partly in some modification of the present system of patronage, and partly in the organisation of parochial councils with statutory rights. Though restricted in certain directions by recent Acts of Parliament, the buying and selling of "livings" still goes on, and is perhaps the most discreditable feature of Church life at the present moment. Were it not for the exceeding jealousy with which Parliament always regards all proposals that affect the rights of property, this blot would long ago have been wiped off the escutcheon of the Church. Only less unfortunate are the efforts of both parties in the Church to secure their own predominance by buying up advowsons and placing the presentation to them in the hands of co-opted bodies of Trustees, pledged to consider first of all the claims of the party, and only secondarily the interests of the parish. Probably the most satisfactory method of presentation would be the creation in each Diocese of a Board of Patronage, to which in each case could be added representatives of the parish to which an appointment was to be made. But it is hard to see how the present patronage system could be changed by any method short of disestablishment.

A properly constituted parochial council might reasonably be given the right to appeal to the Bishop against changes arbitrarily introduced by an incumbent in the services and ceremonial of the church. Such changes may often be in themselves desirable, but if forced on an unwilling congregation they produce a feeling of resentment that far more than counterbalances any possible good that such changes may be intended to effect. There is no department of life in which men are more naturally conservative than in their religion.

Our overgrown dioceses have made it impossible in many cases for the Bishop to be in effective touch with the clergy and laity of his diocese. It might be taken as a fair general rule that no Bishop can act as a real Father in God to a diocese of more than 250 parishes at most. Ritual excesses, slackness, a depressing sense of isolation, are the inevitable result of our present impossibly large dioceses, while the Bishop, instead of being a constitutional ruler, "doing nothing without the presbyters," is in constant danger of being cut off from real contact with his clergy by an inner circle of "court favourites." It must be the aim of any scheme of Church reform to restore to the episcopal office its true character and dignity.

It may be gravely doubted whether the episcopal office does not lose far more than it gains by the "fatal opulence" that is not the less injurious because it is apparent rather than real. The idea that the bishops of the Church of England revel in luxury is ridiculous to those who know how simple is the standard of life in many of our episcopal "palaces," but the fact that the Bishop is known to have a large official income is sometimes made a reason for imposing on him financial

responsibilities that ought properly to fall on the Church laymen of the diocese.

The whole question of Church finance has recently been considered by a Committee appointed by the two Archbishops. In its report, the Committee recommends a system of finance similar to that which is in operation in the Colonial Churches. Every Church member would be expected to contribute a certain sum weekly to the finances of his own parish church. Necessary diocesan expenses would be met by a requisition made on each parish in proportion to its ability to contribute. Similarly, the necessary fund for central organisations would be raised by requisition on each diocese. The administration of the fund so raised would be in the hands of a representative body elected by all parishes that pay the contribution required by the diocese.

This financial scheme does not touch existing endowments, which could only be dealt with by parliamentary action, but it is an attempt to organise the voluntary offerings of the Church on a more orderly system. At present the report is running the gauntlet of a good deal of prejudice and misunderstanding, but it probably indicates the lines along which the work of financial reform will move.

Under the heading of "worship and ceremonial," the most important question before the Church at present is that of Prayer Book revision. Two years ago the Crown issued Letters of Business authorising the Convocations to consider and recommend changes in the Prayer Book. The work is now in progress, and some time must elapse before the recommendations of Convocation are complete. Meanwhile a strong objection to any attempt at revision is expressed in some quarters.

It is generally recognised that some changes are needed, but it is urged that the present moment is not propitious for the purpose. It is said that our age is not strong in liturgical feeling, and that the necessity of submitting the proposals of Convocation to the House of Commons is a fatal objection to proper treatment of the subject. But one may suspect that underlying these objections is the hope of men of strong party feeling that the future may find them in a position to secure larger concessions to their views.

The need for revision is felt in three distinct directions. The changed conditions of modern life have made some of the rubrics difficult to observe, and the practical experience of parochial life has shown the need of changes, most of which are of a wholly uncontentious character. For example, the words of administration at the Holy Communion service, if used in full to every communicant, are found to make the service very long in churches where there are many communicants. Again, the Baptism service is found too long when used, as the Prayer Book intends, as one of the chief public services of the Church.

Besides these matters of practical convenience, there are various directions in which the existing services need enrichment to meet the more complex life of modern times. Forms of intercession for missions, for civic life, for international peace and goodwill, for "seminaries of sound learning," and for many other special purposes, are greatly needed. The introduction of such forms of intercession into our services is an irregularity that is condoned by all sensible Churchmen, but the authorised Prayer Book of the Church ought to express the whole mind of the Church on

the permanent needs for which she is called to pray.

The third need is definition, and it is in this direction that contentious questions necessarily arise. The "Ornaments Rubric" is capable of diverse interpretations and was intended merely as a temporary regulation till further order could be had. Whether it prescribes or proscribes the Eucharistic vestments is a question on which Churchmen honestly differ, and though the Privy Council has declared them illegal, it is doubtful whether, in the light of the further knowledge that has since been thrown on the subject, that verdict would be sustained if the question were again before it. It is unfortunate that the question of Prayer Book revision should turn so largely around what is, after all, only a side-issue, though an important one. But no Church can safely tolerate such diversities of use as are now to be found in the Church of England, and there is grave danger lest the attempt to approximate the English Communion Office to the Roman Mass should lead to a reaction, under the influence of which much of the gain of the last half-century might be lost.

The opportunity of the moment calls for courage, patience, and mutual consideration. The closing words of the Preface of the Prayer Book are as applicable to the circumstances of our time as they were to those of two hundred and fifty years ago:

"Although we know it impossible (in such variety of apprehensions, humours, and interests as are in the world) to please all, nor can expect that men of factious, peevish, and perverse spirits should be satisfied with anything that can be done by any other than them-

selves; yet we have good hope, that what is here presented, and hath been by the Convocations of both Provinces with great diligence examined and approved, will be also well accepted and approved by all sober, peaceable, and truly conscientious sons of the Church of England."

The question of doctrinal revision is one of immense difficulty. As Churchmen, we are in trust with a body of truth designed to serve the needs, not of one age alone, but of all time; not of one nation alone, but of all nations. In as far as the demand for doctrinal revision is a demand for the impoverishment of our inheritance, it is one that the Church cannot entertain. But the forms of expression of truth must vary from age to age, and as the Church of England repudiated, in the sixteenth century, the dogma of transubstantiation that she had previously taught, without denying the truth of the Real Presence; and in the following century shook herself free from the dogmas of Calvinism, in which she was in danger of being entangled; so it may be that the permanent truths that she dare not abandon need restating in language suited to the requirements of the age. It is quite certain that most thoughtful Churchmen would no longer accept statements of the doctrine of the Atonement that were regarded as orthodox theology a century ago. On such questions as Eternal Punishment, the Resurrection of the Body, Inspiration, the nature of Personality, the ultimate destiny of the Universe, religious opinion has changed more, perhaps, than we realise, and it is hard for the old bottles of doctrinal definition to hold the new wine of religious thought. Our great safeguard lies in the appeal of the Church from her own formularies

to the Bible. In whatever words she expresses her belief, those words are to be interpreted in the light of Holy Scripture.

The objection that is felt by many Churchmen to the use of the so-called "Athanasian Creed" in the public services of the Church is based partly on the feeling that the words of that creed do, in certain directions, go beyond warrant of Holy Scripture, and partly on reluctance to commit the general body of Churchmen to a highly metaphysical statement of Christian Philosophy as "necessary to salvation." It is entirely untrue to say that most of those who share this feeling are actuated by any disloyalty to the fundamental doctrines of the Church in regard to the Being of God—doctrines taught with far more real effectiveness in the great authoritative creed of the whole Catholic Church, the so-called Nicene Creed. A Church that values intellectual honesty will always be anxious not to ask of her children any assertion of their belief that can only be given with mental reserve, or "historical imagination."

The question of Church Reform leads naturally to the question of the relations of Church and State. The present position of the Church of England can hardly be permanent, but a gradual change, worked out with mutual goodwill, will be a far better solution than the violent and reckless method of disestablishment.

The Established Church of Scotland affords an illustration of the way in which a large measure of self-government can be exercised by a Church without severing the bond that unites it to the State. The independent authority of the Church Courts has been fully recognised in the Scottish legal system, and the

State will enforce any verdict of these courts on matters that properly belong to their province. The lowest court of the Church of Scotland is the Kirk Session, which corresponds somewhat to an English Church-wardens' meeting, with the important difference that the electors are, not the ratepayers but the members of the Church. It is interesting to notice that the State has not attempted to define the conditions of membership, the definition given in the Act of 1874 being :

"Communicants and such other adherents of the Church as the Kirk Session under regulations to be framed by the General Assembly or Commission thereof . . . may determine to be members of the congregation for the purposes of this Act."

Above the Kirk Session is the Presbytery, which might be compared with an English Diocesan Synod, consisting of clergy and laymen. The Presbytery is a very important body. On it falls the work of regulating public worship within its area, of general oversight of ministers, of appointment of ministers to their cures and of the ordination of candidates for the ministry.

Presbyteries are grouped in Synods, much as Dioceses are grouped in Provinces. Finally, the General Assembly exercises sovereign powers over the whole Church. Ministers and laymen are represented on this body, which is presided over by a Lord High Commissioner, representing the King. Within certain limits, the General Assembly possesses complete legislative power, and its decisions are binding on the Church.

If we ask why the Established Church of Scotland possesses greater powers of self-government than our own, the answer will be found in the fact that the Reformation in Scotland grew up from below, and was

confronted by the opposition of the secular authorities. It was a popular movement, and therefore it shaped its constitutional system on democratic lines. It "put not its trust in princes," and won its freedom by persistent resistance to secular interference. The Church of England bartered no small part of its liberties in exchange for the patronage of kings; but when we are told that the only alternative to our present position is disestablishment, we are entitled to point to the Scottish Established Church as an evidence to the contrary.

The question of disendowment is closely connected with that of disestablishment. In what circumstances would the State be justified in confiscating the endowments of a religious body? The answer is, I think, that there are three eventualities under which such confiscation might become justifiable. If the religious body was manifestly misusing its endowments—if, for example, a Church were to use its resources to give large subsidies to a political party or to support non-resident clergy engaged in secular avocations—the State might justly claim that a body so acting was false to its trust. Or, again, if a religious body possessed resources far in excess of its legitimate needs, the State might justly claim some voice in the disposal of the funds that the Church could not properly use. Or, lastly, if a religious body departed from the fundamental tenets under which the endowments were originally given, it is proper that the State should consider how far the resources of the body should be allowed to be used for the promotion of a religion different from that for which they were given. A question of this kind arose in regard to the chapels of those Presbyterian com-

munities that had drifted into Unitarianism in the eighteenth century, and a special Act of Parliament was passed authorising their retention of the buildings.

Unless it can be contended that the relation with the State is so much of the essence of the Church of England, that the severance of the bonds of union would practically destroy her character—a preposterous contention, in view of the facts of history—it can hardly be maintained that either of the three eventualities mentioned here arise in the case of the Church of England. Whatever may have been the case in the past, she cannot now be accused of misusing her resources; nor can it seriously be contended that they are more than adequate for the work that she has to do. And lastly, she can confidently claim to teach the same fundamental truths that were taught in Anglo-Saxon England, when her earliest endowments came to her.

One practical result of disendowment is not sufficiently recognised by those who pretend to believe that the Church of England would benefit by being more completely dependent on the freewill offerings of her members. A disendowed Church would necessarily depend to a large extent on its wealthier members. The complaint is often made that the Church of England is too much under the influence of the "Capitalist class"; to deprive her of her endowments would be to take from her the only resources that give her the possibility of independence. More than one of our present bishops could give sorrowful testimony to the drying up of the stream of voluntary contributions that has followed outspoken support of Licensing legislation.

A noteworthy feature of our own time is the awaken-

ing of the Christian conscience to the spiritual significance of the economic and social problems of contemporary life. The charge of "otherworldliness" is certainly not one that can be brought against the religious leaders of to-day. In this reawakening the Church of England has taken a leading share. Dr. Westcott has taught the younger generation of Cambridge men to recognise in the Incarnation the basis of social effort, and Dr. Gore and Canon Scott Holland have preached the same gospel in Oxford. Though the Christian Social Union, of which Canon Holland was practically the founder and Bishop Westcott the first President, has not become a very large body, its influence on the Church's outlook has been marked. It would hardly be untrue to say that our Church has begun to give a new significance to the ancient prayer, "Thy Kingdom come." For the realisation of the Divine ideal means that life's true dignity is in service—the service of each for all, and of all for each. The moral responsibility of the employer for his work-people, of the landlord for his tenants, of the city for its citizens, is now recognised as an integral part of the Christian gospel. The work of the Church is the salvation of the individual through faith in Jesus Christ, but the bitter struggle for a bare existence, to which a large part of our people are condemned by existing economic conditions, makes it almost impossibly hard for the spiritual side of their natures to expand. So the Church of England has a political message—using the word in its right sense—a message to the community, the *politeia* of modern England. But if the Church is to preach her gospel effectively she must disentangle herself from association with any particular political party.

It has not been altogether the fault of the Church that she has for so long been closely identified with the Conservative party. She has been forced into this alliance by the hostility of a large section of the Liberal party. But in the last thirty years the number of Churchmen in general sympathy with Liberalism has largely increased, and a small but vigorous body of clergy have actively identified themselves with Socialism. It is said that among "Free Churchmen" there has been a considerable drift in the opposite direction. If this is so, we may hope that in the future the lines of division of English religious life will no longer correspond with the lines of division of political opinion. The moral force of the Church would be stronger if both parties knew that a strong body of Churchmen made its support conditional on the loyalty of the party to great moral principles.

With the aspirations and ideals of the Labour party the Church ought to feel itself strongly in sympathy, though it may be obliged to condemn some of the methods that that party is prepared to condone. The "bottom dog" has a claim on the Church far stronger than that of the "comfortable class." And if he sometimes falls a victim to the glib-tongued agitator, part of the responsibility for this rests on us as a Church, in so far as we have not taught him to feel that the moral influence of the Church is on his side in all efforts to humanise conditions of work.

It is in this work of moral witness that the Church has its greatest opportunity of serving the life of the nation. In the words of Bishop Creighton, "If the State is a necessary organ of the Nation, so also is the Church, for its object is to keep alive, and educate

into increasing sensitiveness, that sense of righteousness which alone exalteth a nation. It is only apparently, and not really, true that the Church has declined in political importance. There was a time when the Church competed with the State as the director and executor of the Nation's wishes. The State is now the sole executor, but it has become so by ceasing to be the director. It is avowedly the exponent, rather than the educator, of the national will. . . . Its main concern is with mechanism, rather than with principles."

Herein lies the Church's opportunity. For she is concerned with principles. It is her business to apply the permanent truths of religion to the changing conditions of human life. So long as she remembers that "God works by influence, not by power"—by guidance, not by coercion—she has a sphere of activity that cannot bring her into collision with the State. It is her task to create the moral impulse to which the State must give expression, to educate the people in unselfish aspirations.

While this task belongs to all religious bodies in a democratic community, it belongs in a peculiar degree to any Church that claims to be national. And for this work the Church of England has three special advantages as compared with other religious bodies. For, firstly, she has her parochial system, which brings her into more intimate touch with the lives of the people than any other religious organisation. In the slums of our great cities, in obscure villages and scattered hamlets, a resident minister lives among the people, knowing their lives with an intimacy of knowledge impossible to any casual visitor or inspector. A Diocesan Synod ought to be able to speak of the lives of the poor with a

fulness of knowledge such as no other body in the country possesses.

Mr. Charles Booth bore testimony some years ago to the assistance that he derived in investigating the social conditions of London, from the parochial clergy. "In my work as an investigator of social problems I have naturally turned to the clergy of the National Church for help. No one can have carried on such work as has been mine without finding out how extraordinary is the amount of knowledge possessed by the clergy on questions relating to the homes and lives of the people. The knowledge each incumbent possesses is no doubt local, and does not extend very widely, but it is thorough so far as it goes. Piece this knowledge together, and it becomes of enormous value."

Then secondly she has, as I have already said, her endowments. Questions are bound to arise from time to time in which the moral principles of Christianity are in conflict with the rights of property. Such questions arose at the beginning of last century in the slavery agitation, and in the brutalities of the early factory system. On such questions the Church would be bound to speak with no uncertain voice, even if her protest involves financial shipwreck; but there is even less excuse for her silence when the possession of endowments protects her from the worst disasters of faithfulness. The unpopular side is often the side of Christ—there is no escape yet from the burden of the cross. The piety of former generations has at least made the cross less hard to bear.

Thirdly, the Church of England has the help of her Catholic inheritance. The generations of the children of God reach back to the beginning of her history.

Imperfect as our Church Calendar is—for saints did not cease in the thirteenth century—it is a constant reminder to us of the responsibility that we owe to our historic past. We cannot purchase the smiles of the world at the cost of being false to a thousand years of history. And the Church of England has also a special responsibility to the future. She holds to her creeds, her sacraments, her apostolic ministry, not merely as an expedient provision for the present, but as a trust for the future. She believes in moral progress because she believes in the Holy Spirit as an abiding Presence moulding human life from within.

Perhaps the greatest need of the Church of England is a clearer vision. She is often too English to see far ahead, too overwhelmed with the needs of the moment to lift up her eyes unto the hills from whence cometh her help. She is rich in pastors, poor in prophets.

But in one direction at least, the imagination of Churchmen has been stirred by the splendour of a great hope. The awakening of missionary enthusiasm in the last half-century has transformed English Christianity. It has given to modern Imperialism the spiritual impulse without which it is bound to deteriorate into tawdriness and vulgarity. Inadequate as the missionary efforts of the Church have been, our fifty missionary dioceses are an inspiration and a challenge.

The foreign missionary work of the Church is carried on by the two great Societies—the Church Missionary Society, with an income of nearly £400,000, and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, with an income of rather over £200,000, and by a number of smaller societies. An attempt has been made to consolidate the missionary activities of the Church of

England by the creation of a United Board of Missions, which acts in conjunction with Diocesan Boards of Missions in almost every diocese. Many Churchmen feel that the foreign mission work of the Church ought not to be left to voluntary Societies, but should become an integral part of the official activity of the Church. Unfortunately, official action tends to damp rather than to kindle enthusiasm, and until the Church has a much stronger corporate consciousness, we are likely to go on doing through voluntary societies much of the work, both at home and abroad, that might be expected to be the work of the Church as a whole. In this, as in so many other ways, the English Church reflects the national tendency to prefer voluntary organisations to State action.

It is well to remember that the Church of England has no monopoly of foreign missionary work. Every Christian denomination in England and in Scotland has launched out into the deep and let down its nets. And this missionary activity of the Churches has an important bearing on the question of reunion. For under the stress of the immense challenge of the heathen world, a spirit of co-operation has grown up among the representatives of the various Christian bodies in the mission field, that may in the end have important results on religious life in England.

The problem of reunion confronts the Church of England in three directions. The authorities of the Roman Church have slammed the door against any *entente*, except on terms that it is quite certain the Church of England will never accept, It may be that the Roman Church is on the eve of changes that will vitally affect her future relations with the Church of

England, but for the present it is idle to hope for any favourable response to the overtures that some over-zealous English Churchmen have made in recent years. With the Eastern Churches, the relations of the Church of England have lately become more friendly. The English Bishop in Jerusalem holds a strategic outpost that brings him into close contact with Eastern Christianity, and in the building of S. George's Cathedral the present Bishop has tried to express the spirit, not of rivalry but of friendship with the great Church of Chrysostom and Athanasius. The *entente cordiale* with Russia has helped to pave the way for mutual intercourse between the Russian and English Churches, and there is good ground for hoping that the long centuries of alienation between the East and the West are passing away.

But what of religious reunion at home? It cannot be said at present that the outlook is hopeful. Nonconformists have not forgotten the disabilities under which they formerly suffered, while the attacks on Church Schools and on the Church in Wales have evoked a deep feeling of resentment on the side of the Church of England. The Free Church Council, whatever were the purposes of its founders, has not made for peace and goodwill.

But below current controversies forces are at work that justify the hope of better things. The growing recognition of the futility of Undenominationalism—which is sometimes only another name for the spiritual pride that looks down on all religious bodies as inadequate embodiments of truth, and seeks to build up a spiritual aristocracy of its own—has left the way open for Interdenominational action. In such organisations

as the Students' Christian Movement, the closest co-operation is found perfectly compatible with entire loyalty to the denominational principle. Neither "Anglican" nor Presbyterian nor Quaker is asked to sacrifice his distinctive beliefs in the effort to arrive at some Greatest Common Measure of residual Christianity. He is encouraged to bring into the movement his own special contribution, and is offered every facility for giving to his religious life the form of expression to which he is accustomed. Along such lines as these we may hope to move further in the future.

It is also a hopeful fact that English Churchmen are much less disposed than they were a generation ago to emphasise the established position of the Church. It is not that we undervalue our position as an Established Church, or the responsibilities that it involves, but that we recognise that the true life of the Church depends on sources of strength that the State can neither give nor take away. A river may flow through sandy wastes or flower-decked meadows, but its life has sprung from the hills far behind, and its home is the sea in front. Establishment may be compared to a channel by which the waters are husbanded for human use. It does not create the river of whose service it avails itself.

Again, the actual conditions of modern life are forcing on us common action to meet common dangers. The spread of atheistic propaganda, the pressure of great social evils, the need of vigorous efforts to counteract the influence of those organs of the press that seek to sow the seeds of ill-will among nations, all call for co-operative activity.

These are hopeful tendencies, but how far do they carry us? Further, perhaps, than we realise. It has

been an encouraging fact to notice, in connection with the Welsh Disendowment agitation, how many convinced "Free Churchmen" have definitely declined to be parties to the crippling of the resources of a Church to which they do not themselves belong, but whose efforts for the spiritual good of the people they fully recognise.

At first sight, the episcopal system seems to constitute an unsurmountable barrier to closer union, but it is at least possible that the matter at issue is one of name rather than of reality. If we called our Bishops superintendent ministers, or permanent Moderators of Diocesan Presbyteries, a good deal of the prejudice that now exists would disappear. The truth is, the real character of the episcopal office is very imperfectly understood in Nonconformist circles, where the old conception of the "Proud Prelate," atoning for his subservience to the Crown by his arrogance to his clergy, may still sometimes be met with. But these ideas are passing away, and it is coming to be recognised that a Society need not be less democratic because it has an orderly system of executive authority.

What future lies before the Church of England? The question, in itself unanswerable, suggests another, What contribution has the Church of England to make to the religious life of the world? What ideals does she stand for?

She stands, first of all, for the principle of individual responsibility. Her ideal is not a Society of well-conducted children, under the benevolent despotism of parental authority, but a Society of grown men, whose loyalty is intelligent and unconstrained. She offers them an open Bible, an unfenced Altar, an unbarred

door of entry. If any man stands outside, he stands there by his own act; if any man comes in, he comes in by his own choice. She has a standard of doctrine in her creeds, but she leaves to the conscience of each individual the task of determining what they mean for him; she has a standard of moral conduct in the Bible, but she gives to her priests no right to dictate details of conduct that every Christian man must decide for himself. To quote the words of the present Primate: "Personally, I find it hard to imagine a case in which I should, on account of his opinions, refuse sacramental privileges—the full rights, that is, of Christian membership—to anyone, be his inquiries or conclusions what they may, who, holding no distinctive trust, declares himself to be loyal to the Church's creed, and claims the Church's ministrations. 'To his own Master he standeth or falleth.'"

Of course the same liberty cannot be accorded by any organised body to its authorised teachers, but even here we claim that no Christian body gives so large a liberty to its ministers as does the Church of England. That the trust is never abused no one would dare to affirm, but the sense of personal responsibility is the secret of all that is best in the life and work of the clergy of the English Church. Instead of becoming a separate caste, teaching a body of doctrine "from a printed book" on the authority of an infallible Church, the English clergy are obliged to "commend themselves to every man's conscience, in the sight of God." Their claim is, "We speak as unto wise men; judge ye what we say."

Then, again, the Church of England stands for the sacramental principle—that inward and spiritual grace

is, by the appointment of God, connected with outward and visible signs. Against the Manichæan tendencies of Puritanism, she asserts the truth that matter is not the enemy of spirit, but the vehicle through which it works. Against the Roman doctrine of Transubstantiation, she affirms that the natural and the supernatural can coexist—that the human is not lost in the Divine. So the English Church denies that "the world is all a fleeting show, for man's illusion given." In the Incarnation she sees the consecration of common things. She thanks God for all the beauty of the world, and links the supreme sacrifice of the Cross with all the daily sacrifice whereby nature gives her life—in cornfield and vineyard—for the needs of man.

The Church of England will probably be not less but more sacramental in the future. For the idea of the splendid isolation of the individual is giving place in modern life to the nobler ideal of the life of the individual fulfilled in the social organism. And nowhere is this conception of life so fully expressed as in the Christian sacraments—in the sacrament through which the Great Society asserts its claim to the life of the individual, and the sacrament in which the noblest ideal of human fellowship is expressed in a common meal, before the watching company of angels and archangels, with Jesus Christ Himself as the giver and the gift. The last generation has seen the reassertion of the sacrificial aspect of Holy Communion; perhaps it will be the special task of the next to give the necessary balance to our Eucharistic teaching by realising more fully the conception of fellowship at the common table. We speak of the Church as a family, but as yet the realisation of all that is involved in that conception

has been very imperfectly achieved. Absurd social distinctions, and our habitual national reserve, have prevented us in the past from feeling that we are members one of another. The Church of the future will have a warmer welcome and a kindlier sympathy for all who come to the feast.

Thirdly, the Church of England stands for sound learning. She believes in freedom of inquiry. There have been moments of distrust—as when Maurice was forced to resign his Professorship at King's College because he taught "the larger hope"; or when a panic-stricken Convocation condemned *Essays and Reviews*—but Cambridge welcomed the man whom King's College had ejected, and one of the authors of *Essays and Reviews* lived to be the honoured Primate of the English Church.

The English Church has learnt not to be afraid of research. Little bodies of Churchmen may fulminate their anathemas against "science, falsely so called" or modern criticism, but they do not represent the true ἦθος of the Church of England, which has long ago abandoned the claim to give or withhold her *nihil obstat* to the results of human thought. Guizot's testimony is worth quoting on this point. Writing to Mr. Gladstone in 1860, he says: "Like you, I could wish that the Anglican Church had more independence and self-government, but such as it is, taking all its history into account, I believe that of all the Christian Churches, it is that in which the spiritual regime is best reconciled with the political, and the rights of divine tradition with those of human liberty." For this *entente* in English life between religion and sound learning, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge are largely responsible. At these older Universities the study of

theology has never been isolated from other departments of learning, and the candidate for Holy Orders shares a common life with men preparing for other professions. Indeed, it is only a minority of the clergy who read for theological honours at Oxford or Cambridge. The result is that our clergy are not theological experts, but men interested in various departments of knowledge. Recent years have seen the development of theological colleges, in which a professional training is given to those who have completed their University course. Of the value of such further training there can be no doubt, but all who desire to see the special *ἦθος* of the English Church retained will be glad that the bishops have decided that after 1914 they will not recognise a theological College training as a substitute for the wider culture of a University degree course.

English life has gained so much from the absence of antagonism between theology and other departments of learning, that it is greatly to be hoped that the new Universities that are destined to play so important a part in the future of our national education will overcome, as they are already doing, the fear that led them at first to leave no place for theology in their educational programme.

One result of this attitude of the Church of England has been that English secular scholarship has been free from the iconoclastic tendency that has been so marked a feature of contemporary thought elsewhere. Even avowedly non-Christian writers generally respect the religious convictions that they repudiate, and very many of the leaders of scientific progress in England have found it possible to combine loyal Churchmanship with fearless freedom of inquiry.

Lastly, the Church of England stands for the conservation of all that speaks of the continuity of her life. The Preface of the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI gives characteristic expression to this feature in the mind of the Church of England. "And if they think much, that any of the old do remain, and would rather have all devised anew; then such men granting some Ceremonies convenient to be had, surely where the old may be well used, there they cannot reasonably reprove the old only for their age, without bewraying their own folly. For in such a case they ought rather to have reverence unto them for their antiquity, if they will declare themselves to be more studious of unity and concord than of innovations and new-fangleness, which (as much as may be with the true setting forth of Christ's religion) is always to be eschewed."

Among the strongest forces in life is the influence of association, and nowhere is this more true than in the sphere of religion. Even in our political life we disguise innovations in ancient forms, and cling to ceremonies that have lost their meaning under the conditions of modern life. We are not willing to secure the mere effectiveness of the moment at the cost of losing the ceremonial usages that bear witness to the continuity of our history. It is part of the work of a National Church to foster this reverence for the past; and while she must watch against the "great excess and multitude" of "dumb and dark Ceremonies," she must remember that in an age of turmoil and change, men ask of their religion that it should recall to them the unchanging realities of the eternal world. An up-to-date Church may mean a Church that has sacrificed her deeper power of appeal to minister to the changing

fashion of the moment—like a buoy detached from its moorings and drifting with the drifting current.

The supreme fact of our own time in England is the coming of age of Democracy. By a series of irretrievable steps, sovereignty has passed into the hands of the people. Where can they look for the guidance without which the possibilities of the future can never be realised—where if not to the Church that more than twelve hundred years ago gave to Anglo-Saxon England its earliest consciousness of union? Is it for this high destiny that God has been fitting her through centuries of discipline? She asks of her children only the *credenda* that lie at the heart of the Christian faith; her appeal is not to the fears but to the conscience of men; she links the hopes of the future with the experience of the past. She is of this world, for her roots are deep in the life of the nation; yet she is not of this world, for her strength is in an Unseen Presence that unites her to a Divine Order.

"What the soul is in the body, that the Church is in the world." To be the soul of this new England that is growing up around us, the spiritual self of a self-governing people—may we dare to hope that this is the destiny that lies before the Church of England?

She cannot meet this challenge unless, like her Master, she is prepared not to be served, but to serve, and to give her life a ransom for many. She must "gird herself with the apron of humility," asking no privilege but the privilege of ministry, claiming no rights but the right to offer to all men the gospel of fellowship and forgiveness. Thus only can she lift a free people into the higher freedom that comes with the consciousness of a Divine call, and hold together the life of the nation in the bond of a common allegiance to Christ.

I cannot close better than with some words from one of the greatest books of the last generation, *John Inglesant*:

"You will do wrong—mankind will do wrong—if it allows to drop out of existence, merely because the position on which it stands seems to be illogical, an agency by which the devotional instincts of human nature are enabled to exist side by side with the rational. The English Church, as established by the law of England, offers the supernatural to all who choose to come. It is like the Divine Being Himself, whose sun shines alike on the evil and on the good. Upon the altars of the Church the Divine presence hovers as surely, to those who believe it, as it does upon the splendid altars of Rome. Thanks to circumstances which the founders of our Church did not contemplate, the way is open; it is barred by no confession, no human priest. Shall we throw this aside? It has been won for us by the death and torture of men like ourselves in bodily frame, infinitely superior to some of us in self-denial and endurance. God knows that I am not worthy to be named with such men; nevertheless, though we cannot endure as they did—at least let us not needlessly throw away what they have won. It is not even a question of religious freedom only, it is a question of learning and culture in every form. I am not blind to the peculiar dangers that beset the English Church. I fear that its position, standing, as it does, a mean between two extremes, will engender indifference and sloth; and that its freedom will prevent its preserving a discipline and organising power, without which any community will suffer grievous damage; nevertheless as a Church it is unique; if suffered to drop out of existence, nothing like it can ever take its place."

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THE fullest and most impartial *History of the English Church* is that in nine volumes, edited by Stephens and Hunt (Macmillan). Dr. Dearmer's *Everyman's History of the English Church* (Mowbray, 1*s.*) is a useful introductory sketch.

The following books are useful for various parts of the subject: Creighton, *The Church and the Nation* (Longmans); Dr. Gore, *Roman Catholic Claims* (Murray); Lord Selborne, *A Defence of the Church of England against Disestablishment* (Macmillan); Maurice, *The Kingdom of Christ* (Macmillan); Dr. Randall Davidson, *The Character and Call of the Church of England* (Macmillan, 2*s.* 6*d.*); *The Official Year-Book of the Church of England* (S.P.C.K., 4*s.*).

The best text-book for the teaching of the English Church is the Book of Common Prayer. Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity* is still the most adequate exposition of the position of the Church of England, in its threefold appeal, to reason, Holy Scripture, and tradition.

Some of the things that I have said in this little book I have said, in a different connection, in my Hulsean Lectures on *The Rights and Responsibilities of National Churches* (Camb. Univ. Press, 2*s.* 6*d.*).

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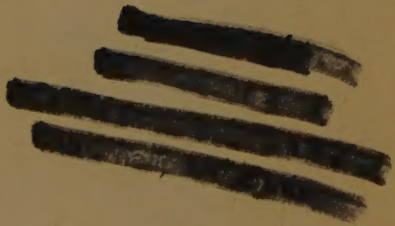

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